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# Student Showcase 2001 Journal

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University of Alaska Anchorage  Volume 17



Student Showcase 2001 Journal

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## A Special Thank You



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## This Journal



Selections for the UAA Student Showcase 2001 Journal were taken from award winning papers and projects presented at the seventeenth annual Student Showcase Academic Conference held at the University of Alaska Anchorage on April 7, 2001. Papers published in the Journal were edited in accordance with the publication manuals of the Americal Psychological Association, 4th edition; the MLA Handbook, 4th edition; and the Chicago Manual of Style, 14th edition. The contents of this Journal are available on the Student Showcase 2001 CD-ROM.

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Olympics of the Mind

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Olympics of the Mind

## About the Student Showcase Program



Student Showcase Academic Conference, Award Ceremony, and Journal publication have been in existence for seventeen years. The Conference still remains unique in the State of Alaska; only students present original papers and projects. The Student Showcase Committee reviews policies and procedures, promotional materials, and selects award winners.

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Each year Student Showcase creates an opportunity for dialogue among university and community members. Students submit their best work for evaluation by objective faculty members from their discipline; selected works are presented at the Conference; and distinguished community members are invited to the Conference to evaluate, critique, and comment on students' works. The very best papers and projects are published in the Student Showcase Journal & CD-ROM.

This year students from Kodiak, Wasilla, Eagle River, as well as Anchorage participated in the Conference held on April 7, 2001. From the seventy-five entries submitted, forty were presented at the Conference, and twelve were selected as award recipients. The award winners attended the Student Showcase Awards Reception, where they were invited to have their work published in the Student Showcase 2001 Journal & CD-ROM.

The UAA Student Showcase Program is designed to highlight the extraordinary work of students throughout the University of Alaska Anchorage system. It is with great pride that we present the Student Showcase Journal for 2001.

Carole L. Lund, Chair  
UAA Student Showcase Committee



Student Showcase Journal

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Until the nineteenth century, education of Alaska Natives traditionally took place in the home and community and centered around survival skills and cultural values. Following the 1867 American purchase of the Alaskan Territory, missionaries of various denominations began schools subsidized by the United States government. Subsequently, the responsibility for educating Native children in Alaska shifted from the U. S. Bureau of Education to the Bureau of Indian Affairs and finally, with the advent of oil revenue, to the State of Alaska (Seyfit & Hamilton, 1997). The increasing social, economic, and cultural changes occurring in Alaska, particularly since the 1960s, swept away the economic foundation of village life, increased the incidence of alcoholism and violence, and triggered many other social problems (Seyfit, Crossland & Hamilton, 1996).

As the villages of rural Alaska are pulled toward the more dominant U. S. society, Alaska Native youth face a changing environment, much as immigrants face a new world, with new rules, opportunities, and dangers (Seyfit & Hamilton, 1998). Peers, home, and school are the major areas of interaction for young people, and it is the attitudes and behaviors of people in those areas that affect their feelings of self-worth (Hare, 1985). This paper examines the literature of previous research studies on the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 and subsequent changes in the way of life for Natives, educational aspirations among rural Alaska youth, teen pregnancy, substance abuse among Alaska Natives, and the loss of Native culture, and explores the possibility that feelings of self-esteem may affect the goals and expectations of Alaska Native youth.

#### Economic Concerns

The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 (ANCSA) and ensuing major oil developments drastically

changed the way of life for Natives. A cash economy has largely replaced subsistence, and housing, infrastructure and transportation have been revolutionized (Jorgensen, 1990). In many communities, people have learned to depend on help from federal and state subsidies, without which many villagers could scarcely exist, since unemployment is around 60% among working-age people. Such dependency negatively affects feelings of self-worth and self-esteem. The assistance received includes not only direct payments to individuals but also housing, education, water supplies, public-sector jobs, medical and social services, and mail subsidies that keep bush airlines flying. Should such subsidies ever be reduced due to declining oil revenues, for example, village life would become even more difficult, and pressure for outmigration would increase (Hamilton & Seyfit, 1993).

In the years following ANCSA, few Natives gained temporary employment in the private sectors of the energy and energy-related industry, and fewer yet gained permanent employment. Job training and skill development in community improvement projects have been inadequate to make workers competitive in the private labor market, and the twelve Native-owned regional corporations that were created and granted extensive mineral rights to all the settlement lands did not all thrive, possibly because they arose from legislation rather than through entrepreneurial ideas or ability. They often lacked experienced managers, leading to poor financial condition and dissipation of native wealth rather than its protection (Hamilton & Seyfit, 1993; Jorgensen, 1990).

#### Education

As Alaska Native students, representing the pool of potential future leaders, reach their middle teens, their hopes for attending college seem to diminish. This may reflect an increasing realization that college is not in their future, some discouragement by those who influence them, or just shifting goals (Seyfit & Hamilton, 1998). For those Alaska Native students who do successfully gain entrance to college, academic



success may be dependent on their ability to learn university ways of verbal and written communication, assertiveness, and self-expression, resulting in considerable adaptation to the dominant culture (Barnhardt, 1994).

Many students worry whether bush education adequately prepares them to survive in college, and such doubts affect self-confidence, aspirations, and ultimately their life choices (Hamilton & Seyfit, 1993). It would seem that these doubts may be justified since bush high schools are frequently criticized for producing students who score well below national test score averages, who rarely succeed in college programs, and who are ill-trained for employment (Seyfit & Hamilton, 1997). However, more girls than boys are likely to plan for college, in part because job and recreation opportunities available in isolated rural areas tend to appeal most strongly to males, and those jobs requiring education, such as in the North's booming public sector, tend to fit more closely with traditional female roles (Seyfit & Hamilton, 1998). This leads to disproportionate female outmigration from rural communities, causing a gender imbalance of approximately 113 males to 100 females. The excess of young men in villages places pressure on younger girls who have not yet left and, as a result, many become pregnant (Hamilton & Seyfit, 1993).

### Teen Pregnancy

The rate of teen pregnancy in bush communities is two and a half times the national average (Seyfit & Hamilton, 1997). Teen pregnancy is strongly associated with low self-esteem, which is closely tied to attitudes and behavior. While low self-esteem contributes to the risk of adolescent pregnancy, increased self-esteem leads to more responsible sexual behavior and a reduction in teenage pregnancy (Moyse-Steinberg, 1990). Since four out of five girls who become pregnant in high school drop out, one of the most important components in prevention programs is the enhancement of self-esteem. In such programs, girls are helped to improve their academic, coping, decision-making and life-planning skills (Moyse-Steinberg,



1990; Drummond & Hansford, 1991). It may be that these same skills that equip young people with the strength to withstand the social pressure of their peers would also enable them to avoid other social pitfalls such as alcohol and drug abuse and family violence.

### Substance Abuse

4 Alaska has the highest rate of alcohol-related hospitalizations in the nation, along with one of the highest per capita alcohol consumption levels, and it is among the top five states in the country in terms of prevalence of binge drinking. It is not surprising, therefore, that five to seven Alaska Native children per 1,000 live births require follow-up evaluation because of suspected fetal alcohol syndrome versus 0 to 1.3 per 1,000 live births in the White populations in the United States. Fetal alcohol syndrome rates are likely related to low socioeconomic status, which is, in turn, associated with low self-esteem, and alcohol and other substance abuse are also suspected of contributing to Alaska Native youth dropping out of school (Egeland et al, 1998). Alcoholism destroys families, social relationships, and careers and is a factor in nearly half of all suicides, homicides, assaults, rapes, and accidental deaths. In rural Alaska, estimates suggest that half of all crimes, three-quarters of all violent felonies, and nine-tenths of reported child abuse cases are alcohol related (Seyfit, et al., 1996).

These high rates of violence and health problems attest to the seriousness of drinking and its effects among Alaska Natives. The alterations in family roles, community functions, and other aspects of culture loss over the past 25 to 30 years may play a significant role in Alaska Natives' use of alcohol. Conflicts involving cultural identity as well as behavioral and lifestyle problems have resulted from adjusting to the rapid industrialization and cultural changes over the past few decades, and one way of coping with those feelings, particularly for the younger men and women, may be drinking alcohol. Since the late 1980s, Alaska has been among the five states with the highest annual rates of child abuse, accidental death,



assault, rape, and suicide, all of which have been linked to alcohol abuse. Native women in Alaska face a much higher risk of violence than do women nationwide, and the severity and nature of this violence shows a relationship between victimization and drinking. Such family violence may place children at higher risk for abuse and neglect as well as increase the chance that they too will abuse alcohol later in life (Segal, 1998).

#### Culture

The more recent social changes fall particularly hard on young people, who grow up in a world so altered that, for some, it seems that their elders' traditional knowledge (dismissed by one youth as "grandpa with his harpoon") no longer applies. The cultures of indigenous Alaskans have been radically modified by the influx of other peoples who have imposed new customs, traditions, and economic systems (Segal, 1998). Young people in rural Alaska form images of what are appropriate or desirable futures for them, such as higher education, urban living, or certain jobs, from the cultural knowledge and experience that they acquire in their everyday living from families, schools, social networks, and neighborhoods. Many Native adolescents are raised by their grandparents, whose opinions obviously influence them strongly, yet these elders may not have experienced formal education; therefore, ideas such as career, city life, and college education might seem foreign to them. Any radical change, such as moving to a city, requires not only the usual attributes of ambition, self-esteem, and independence, aspects of the personality that are developed through socialization and family dynamics, but also an openness for acculturation. This is not always encouraged by Native role models (Barnhardt, 1994; Seyfit & Hamilton, 1998).

#### Conclusion

Much has been written on life in the remote areas of Alaska and the social problems existing there today; however, little research has been done specifically on aspects of self-esteem and Alaska Native youth in rural towns and villages. Further research is needed to assess Alaska Native youth's esti-

mations of self-respect, self-confidence, and self-worth in relation to rural economies, education, teen pregnancy, substance abuse and Native culture. This analysis of self-esteem and Alaska Native youth is significant because it suggests that low self-esteem may be a contributing factor to several of the social ills currently existing in rural Alaska. However, researchers should be sensitive to the possibility that, although higher self-esteem may lead to a stronger belief in oneself, increased self-respect and pride, and decreased dependency, it may conflict with a traditional subsistence lifestyle that values group rather than individual effort to ensure survival in the brutally harsh environment of rural Alaska.

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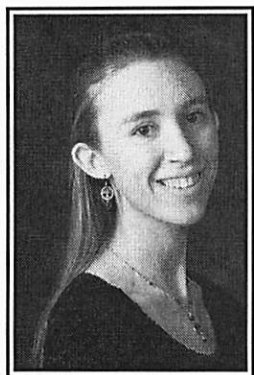
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Claude Debussy (1682-1918) was the most influential composer of the French Impressionist Era. Artists of this time depicted atmospheres and moods in their works by suggestion rather than direct representation. Debussy obtained many of his ideas from contemporary French poets or painters such as Claude Monet, as well as from composers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Most of

Debussy's piano music was published in the early 1900s; these two short works are selected from his two books of piano preludes. The titles are placed at the end of the music, showing that they only suggest the meaning of the pieces. The first, No. 2 from book I, is called *Voiles*, or "Sails." It could be interpreted as representing small puffs of wind against the sails of a boat. The repeated low note is reminiscent of the depth of the sea. Debussy uses several different levels of dynamics to portray the varying strength of the breeze, but keeps most of them *pianissimo* (very soft). The second prelude, No. 18 from book II, is entitled *General Lavine-Eccentric*. Its comical, energetic character is expressed through the sharp contrast between *forte* (loud) and *piano* (soft) and the repetition of the rhythmic motive that opens the piece. Throughout the scores of both preludes, Debussy gives specific directions for dynamics, tempo, and expression. However, like the paintings of Monet, the music only alludes to an idea, and leaves the rest of the interpretation to the performer or listener.





"Survival of the fittest" is a common phrase which addresses a basic instinct. In the wild, it refers to the ability of one species to dominate another, or, within a species, of one animal's ability to outlast its counterparts. In the early times of man, success was dependent on this natural drive and it dominated daily activities. Archeologists have pieced together a physical record of man's mysterious prehistoric activities by studying skeletal remains and artifacts. However, without a written text, insight into what early man thought about and found important can best be perceived by scrutinizing their art.

Some scholars posit that "rituals and ceremonies involving art became necessary, possibly to reinforce political power." (Adams 31). Since the survival of one group over another was associated with strength and numbers, early men may have felt empowered by those ceremonies. A cult following was established as the observances gained popularity. It seems reasonable they would try to record the rituals as a means of remembering the exact sequence of events. However, there may have been other purposes for early art.

Other scholars believe that Paleolithic cave drawings of animals and humans represent a connection between man and spirit and, in particular, drawings with exaggerated eyes looking directly at the observer. Aboriginal art of Australia offers fine examples, especially the drawings of the Wandjinas (Cloud Spirits). Others believe the drawings were made in an attempt to control the creatures shown, a sort of sympathetic magic (Adams 38-40). Regardless of the theory considered, it appears that early man made serious efforts to record what had been important to his survival.

As nomads, it was necessary to follow the herds to maintain their primary food supply. Men exhibited their dependence



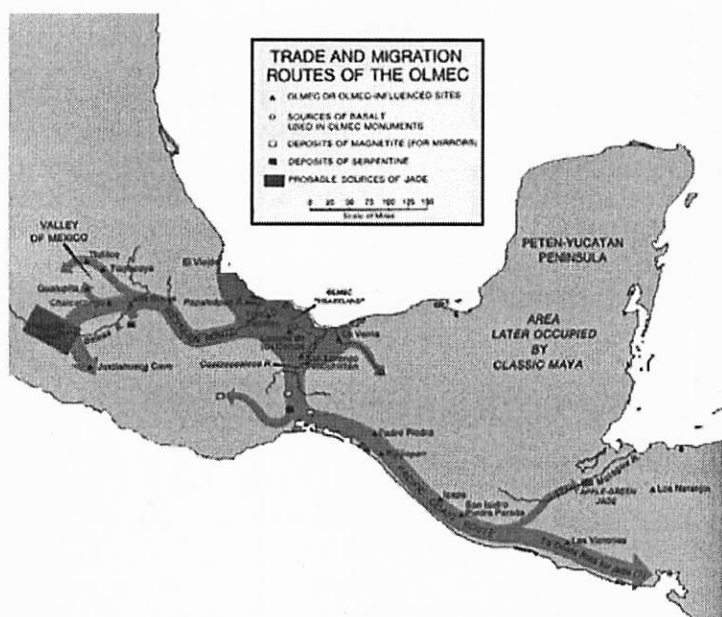
on animals by the great numbers of them drawn. However, during the Neolithic era, they became farmers, and surviving the environment meant finding adequate water and agricultural sources. As confidence was gained in managing the animals and fields, they still faced challenges presented by “greater-than-human” realities (Luckert 5). The Australian Aborigine, African Yoruba, and North American Native cultures are examples of ancient communities who explained “greater-than-human” realities through mythology and religion, and which have survived to modern times. Today, studying belief systems of societies with ancient roots gives us insight into cultures from man’s unwritten past.

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One observation is that religion helped men learn to live with greater-than-human realities in a submissive and dependent relationship. What they couldn’t scientifically conquer (through understanding), they surrendered to (through religion). Consequently, certain ancient human activities took on a soteriological meaning as they provided a union between life and afterlife, a connection between men and gods (Luckert 5-11). So, the inseparable spiritual link forged between survival activities and religion left an unmistakable mark in their culture; that connection was the inspiration of most of early man’s “art”. Archeological remains of one such non-writing people have yielded visions of their thoughts and how religion influenced their lives: the Olmecs of Mesoamerica.

Three thousand years ago the earliest settlers in Mesoamerica (Middle America) were the Olmecs, who lived in an area of about 7000 square miles (see fig. 1). By 1500 B.C. they had achieved a highly civilized society with a clear separation of upper and middle/lower classes, and a rich, complex wealth of art. Their accomplishments took place in what most Americans would consider hostile territory: the very hot and wet tropical lowlands of the Mexican states of Veracruz and Tabasco (on the Gulf of Mexico), the three most significant sites being Tres Zapotes, San Lorenzo, and La Venta. (Miller 38-42).





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Fig. 1. Trade and migration routes of the Olmec. America's First Civilization, 102.

The Olmecs rose to the physical challenge of creating a civilization in an area over abundant with rain and jungle growth. They developed their society from land that was relatively flat with large areas of savanna and swamp; neither was useful in food production. Cleared jungle areas were the choice planting zones, though fields required constant work to keep the vegetation at bay. Also, the nearby jungle provided many wild animals for protein sources, as did the fresh and salt waters. (The importance of aquatic animals for their diet is well documented in their art.) Flora was abundant, as well as rubber, which they used to make balls for a royal court game similar to soccer. An agrarian economy, however, provided the basics of their diet: the standards still in use in Mexico today of squash, beans and corn (Bernal 13-20).

The La Venta site, one of the most important Olmec centers, was constructed on a kind of "island" in the midst of a

swamp. Down the middle of this “island”, on the highest elevation, is a fluted cone-shaped pyramid about one hundred feet high, platforms, tombs, mounds, and complexes (see fig. 2). Artifacts and sculptures, colossal heads, stelae, and altars were unearthed and found in the overgrown vegetation. The ancient Olmecs went to great lengths to construct this center, importing various stones by the tons from as far away as 60 miles. They had no beasts of burden and moved the stones via water ways, ultimately using human labor for final placement. The process took as long as three generations and required many thousands of workers (Coe 67).

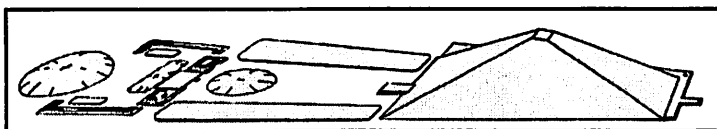


Fig. 2. La Venta and its complexes. *Urban Planning in Pre-Columbian America*, 53.

The Olmecs were likely part of the nomads who crossed the Bering Land Bridge, traversing mountain ranges, deserts, and high plains, to find the abundant food and water sources of this region. As they migrated southward, they passed many active volcanoes, with fiery tops, streams of flowing lava, and rising steam clouds. This was certainly a greater-than-human entity which they could not fathom. The Olmecs made this incomprehensible phenomenon understandable by naming it the Volcano Serpent (an interpretation from stone glyphs). Associating the snake with the deity may have resulted during the southern migration from Siberia as increased numbers of snakes were seen (Coe 70). In addition, “hissing” is an obvious activity common to both volcanoes and serpents.

The Volcano Serpent left basalt remnants on the countryside, many in their natural spherical form. Certain members of the Olmecs who encountered them knew they were remains of the Volcano Serpent. Sensing the value and importance of the



stone "head" shapes, certain members found that placing them in fields insured fertile crops (especially if the land was rich in volcanic ash). This success with crops identified by the manipulation of basalt was no doubt viewed as a pragmatic use of the Volcano Serpent's gifts, helping some Olmec members rise to priestly status (Coe 71-72).

In so many ways, water (either too much or not enough) was critical to life. It's little wonder that rain and cloud gods are frequent art subjects (Bernal 13-20). In fact, many aspects of the Olmec environment are identified in their religion as traits of the Fire Serpent (who carries the sun across the sky) and his avatars (Volcano Serpent, lord of volcanoes and hearths, and Earth Serpent, lord of rain and fertility) (Coe 114-115). There are many other deities they worshiped, but a limited focus on the Fire Serpent helps to establish the relationship between their religion and art. One of his responsibilities was fertility of the soil, and his gift to mankind was maize. In many ways, the maize plant symbolized man's relationship with the Earth Serpent.

A comparison of young corn plants and snake tongues quickly illustrates the first observation the Olmecs would have made; one looks just like the other (see fig. 3). Another example of this relationship is found at a site called Chalcatzingo on a basalt relief, which depicts a story involving the volcanic Earth Serpent and agriculture (see fig. 4). As the Earth Serpent exhaled its curling smoke, clouds formed, dropping phallic-shaped raindrops (this may be a reference to the anterior part of a snake) which induced the maize plants to sprout. Once they matured, the green drooping leaves resembled the serpent tail. The Priest/Priestess is inside the mouth of, and is seated on, a stylized version of the coiled serpent, holding a similar image at his/her breast. Further, the Olmec incorporated snake features in the headgear worn by the Priest/Priestess. It contains Quetzal feathers, which were green and drooping, just like the maize leaves. (Coe 46-49, 65-67).

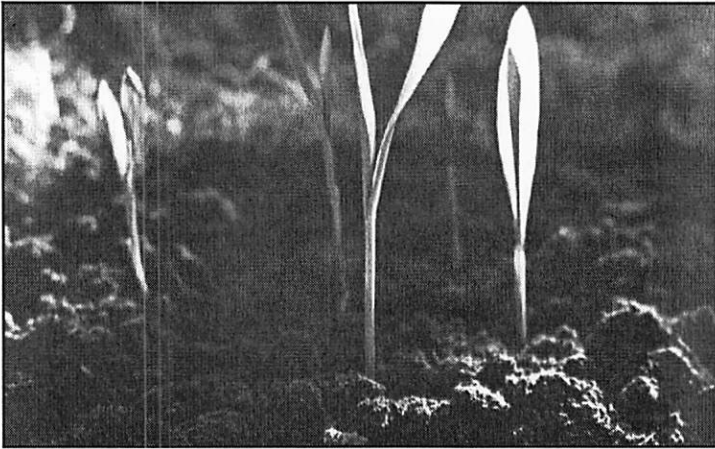
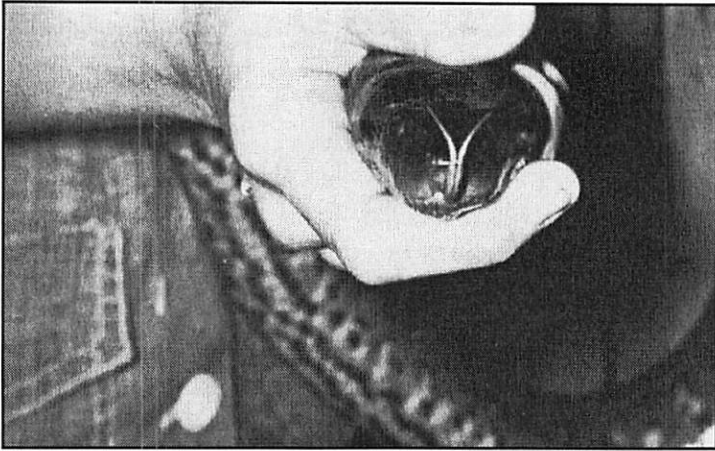


Fig 3. Split tongue of an anaconda compared with young maize plants. Olmec Religion: A Key to Middle America and Beyond, 66-67.

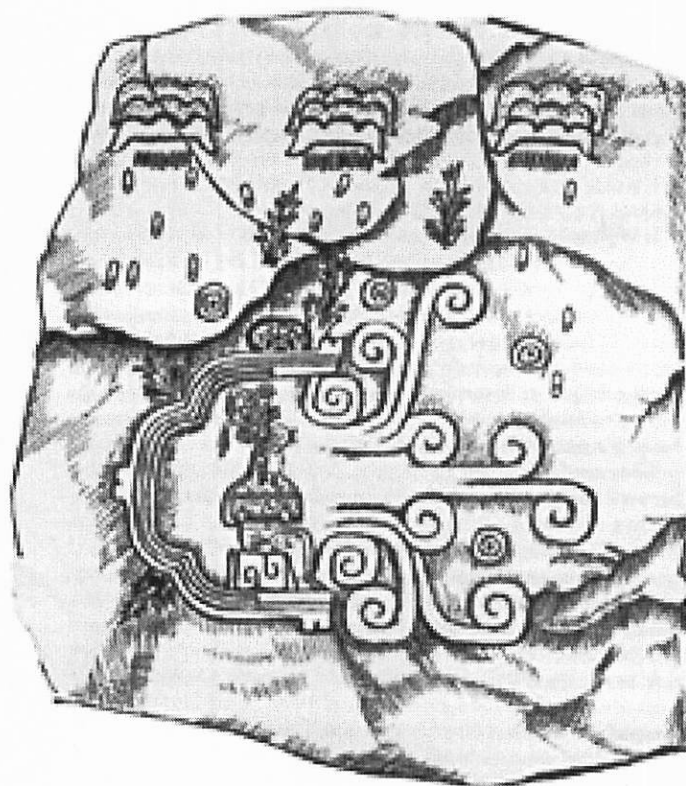


Fig. 4. Chalcatzingo: petroglyph 1. Olmec Religion: A Key to Middle America and Beyond, 69.

Beneath the corn silk of a mature plant's fruit is a new creation, the husk with kernels. This is reminiscent of the molting process for a snake and is connected to the concept of rebirth. The kernels themselves have been likened to snake scales as seen in the Aztec "Chicomolotzin," which depicts the tail section of a rattlesnake, corn cobs with kernels exposed inserted between the scales (see fig. 5) (Luckert 65-66). This sculpture seems to further support that the Olmec believed maize growth was directly affiliated with the Earth Serpent.

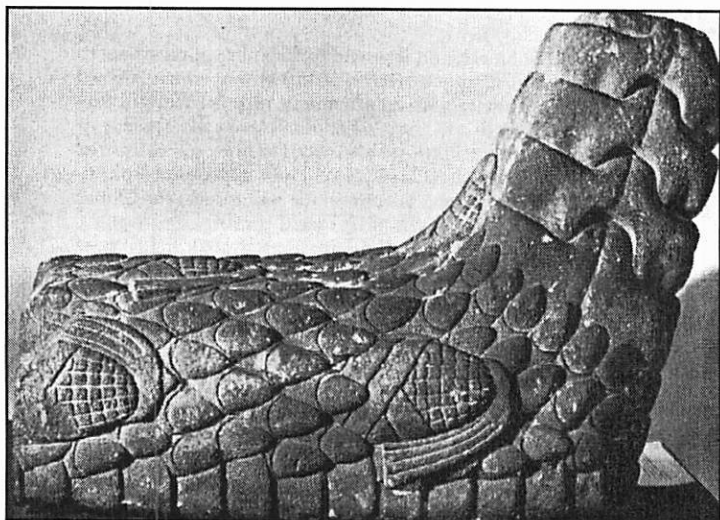


Fig. 5. The Aztec Chocomolotzin showing corn growing within the snake scales. *Olmec Religion: A Key to Middle America and Beyond*, 69.

On a more personal level, Olmec men found the snake's shape having procreative powers and associated with their phallic member. On the other hand, women were not associated with the phallic worship. References to women are found in many sacred serpent sculptures, mainly associated with the serpent mouth, the most sacred place on earth for the Olmec. This last example may explain the American Indian myth of *vagina dentate* in a more positive light. The teeth found in the serpent mouth, though fearsome to modern man, may have merely been viewed as one step (eating) supportive of the growth process. Also, as the natural snake entered small crevices in the body of the Earth Serpent, Olmec planters lived in pit houses, and adult "Snake" men had the womb of "Snake" women for comfort and refuge. Crying Olmec children had drooping lower mouths much like the lower jaw of a snake and this mouth type (usually with fangs) is represented in many statues



(see fig. 6). Humans had enough affinities with the Serpent God to incorporate combined traits into their art (Luckert 65-69).



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Fig. 6. Kunz Ax of the Rain God, showing baby and jaguar/serpent features. *America's First Civilization*, 44.

The priests, utilizing knowledge of the Earth Serpent, viewed geological formations such as mountain ridges and vol-



canoes as serpent bodies and heads; the La Venta site is constructed along just such a formation. In the North American states of Louisiana, South Carolina, and Ohio, there are circular ridges similar to excavated courtyards found at La Venta and San Lorenzo. "That many, if not all, of these ridges and mounds represent serpent bodies and serpent mouths stand for me beyond the reaches of doubt," stated Karl Luckert in his book Olmec Religion: A Key to Middle America and Beyond. Luckert further points out that the La Venta pyramid is a serpent freeing itself from the earth, affiliating it with the greater-than-man realities of sun, moon, and stars. Once again, the Olmec found ways to connect their life with the serpent. Also, they made connections to the Serpent by using specific stones for carving and construction.

Unhewn lithic altars found in Mesoamerica consisting of one upright (phallic) and one horizontal stone address fertility issues between men and women. This association of stones with fertility was also found in Menhirs and "sliding stones" in Europe, revered by women until recent times. Even the type of stone was as important as the use of stone. Success with Volcano Serpent's basalt "heads" for crop fertility led to the use of basalt in carvings as a means to identify man with the deity. This is one explanation for the basalt colossal head statues found: a unification of man with god (see fig. 7). Subsequent to their carving and placement, some of the heads have been disfigured, perhaps an attempt to destroy the man-god connection when a new ruler gained power. There is another explanation for the destruction and burial of basalt carvings: religious reformation (Luckert 72-88).

When the Protestant Reformation occurred in Europe, many iconoclasts destroyed artwork no longer in favor. It is during a second stage of Olmec society, that of the Green Reformer, that serpentine and jade replaced basalt as a carving medium. Their green color more closely symbolized the Serpent God and its attributes, but it had to be hauled from 100 miles away, a testimony to the Olmec's zealous needs. (Basalt,



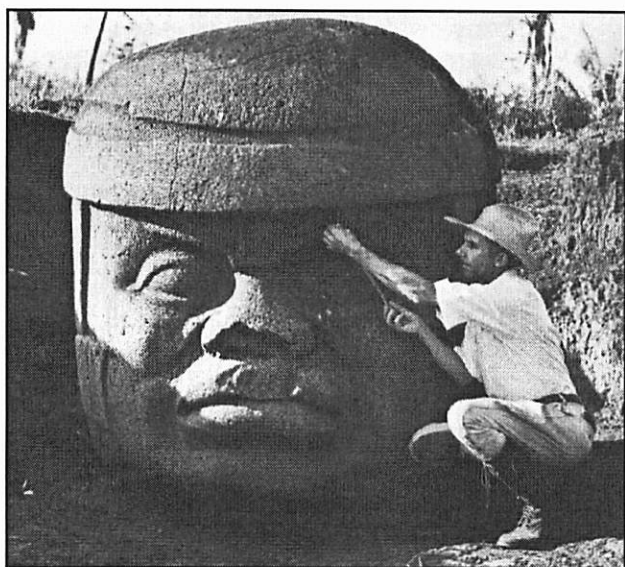


Fig. 7. Matthew Stirling of the Smithsonian Institution at Tres Zapotes, 1939, with Colossal Head. *America's First Civilization*, 46

however, was still considered a sacred substance, and as such was buried to return it to its original point of creation.) This religious connection between jade and the Serpent God may help to explain why Middle Americans were fascinated with it. For example, in later years, the Aztec King Montezuma presented Cortes with four jade beads as a gift, a gift Montezuma regarded as greater than gold (but one that Cortes was infuriated with). More importantly, jade is found in serpentine metamorphic strata. Jade, therefore, is more precious than serpentine, as it comes from the center of the Serpent's body. It was during this reformation that Olmec interest went literally underground (Luckert 91-95).

At the La Venta site, 253 green serpentine rocks were unearthed from a ceremonial court. North of there, the archaeological team of Drucker, Heizer, and Squier, also unearthed a

mosaic face of serpentine on top of a twenty-foot deep pit (see fig. 8). The pit was filled with twenty-eight layers of well-arranged serpentine rocks, embedded in olive and blue clay. What was this? Luckert believes it to be a three dimensional sculpture of a Snake God completely underground. The sculpture features a diamond pattern “collar” which exactly duplicates the scale pattern of a rattlesnake, common to Middle America. The Olmecs may have added this detail lastly (as it is off center to the rest of the mosaic) to make sure no one confused the head with that of any other creature (Luckert 96-106).

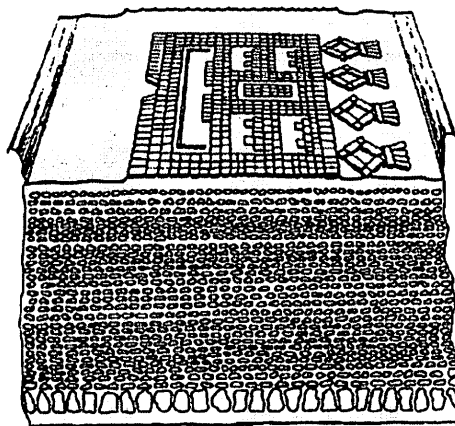


Fig. 8. La Venta underground mosaic sculpture. Olmec Religion: A Key to Middle America and Beyond, 100.

The concept of underground sculptural burials leads to the issue of human burials and tombs. As in other ancient societies, tombs were constructed only for chief leaders of the Snake society. One which has been excavated is located immediately north of the La Venta mosaic mask, in a mound about

2.25 meters high. Inside was a cist of sandstone slabs where the deceased was positioned. Jewelry and a jade figurine were found where the body would have been. Over this was a covering of cinnabar putty (Aztec chiefs were buried in just this manner) suggesting envelopment by blood, the essence of life. The most important items entombed, however, were 37 jade and serpentine celts surrounding the cinnabar oval. The celts, made from the "body" of the Serpent, represented the teeth of the god, and symbolized the process of returning to nature for this lord, or rebirth, via entrance through the "mouth" of the Earth Serpent. An even greater discovery underscoring the affects of religion on Olmec art is found in the famous "Offering No. 4," which also appears to have been intentionally buried soon after its placement (Luckert 113-122).

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"Offering No. 4" is a deposit of six celts and sixteen jade and serpentine figurines (see fig. 9). They appear similar in style, including the deformed head shape, acquired by binding the head in childhood. One pitted figure stands with his back to the celts, looking towards the others, and is made from a different rusty-red stone. The other figurines are smoothly carved, all arms intact, heads slightly raised, and some with red coloration. Four of the six celts have traces of relief carving. It is believed by Luckert that the celts represent teeth in the mouth of the Serpent, and the figurines are those of the Snake Men, the God's followers. It is impossible to tell why these figurines were placed in their pit and buried, but it most likely indicates an initiation rite. Since they were found together, with no defects from use (such as broken off arms), they are not representational of other findings. In this instance, they left a picture of some important gathering, and due to the jade and serpentine used, again signify affiliation with the Serpent God (Luckert 121-129).

Another explanation for "Offering No. 4" is presented in Mary Ellen Miller's book, The Art of Mesoamerica. She agrees with Luckert's assumption that the figurines represent an important event because of the stone used and masterful han-

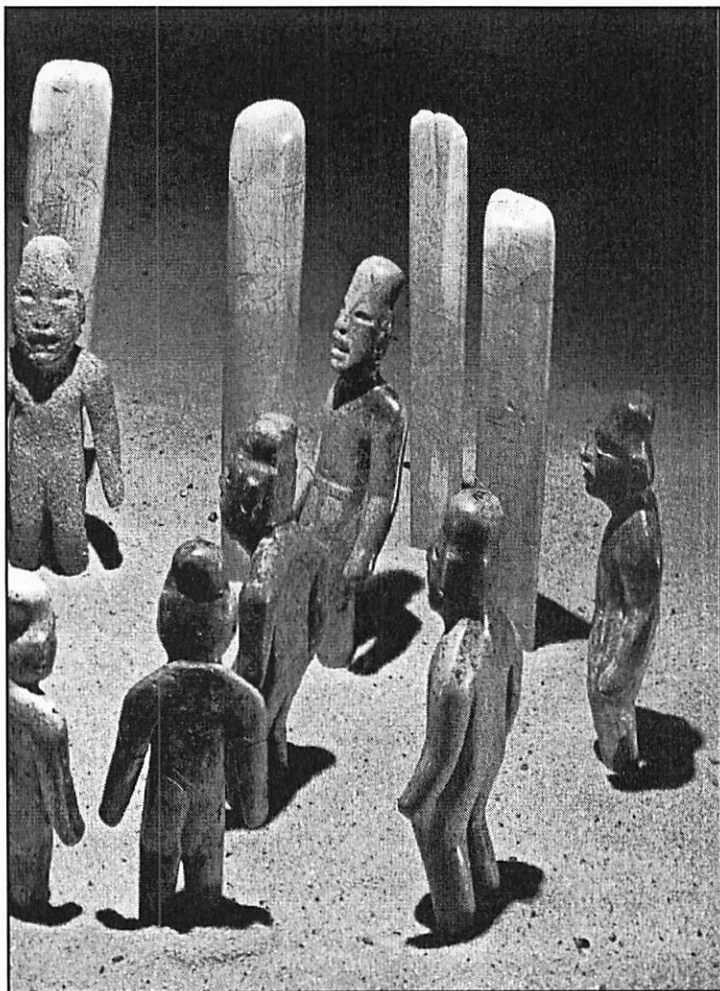


Fig. 9. Detail of Offering No. 4, La Venta, 1955. America's First Civilization, 69.

dling by the carver. However, she, like many other scholars, believes the sinewy jade statues are feline in their posture, a reference to a Jaguar deity. Also, the celts, in her opinion, recall La Venta basalt columns in one of the sunken courtyards, not

the teeth of a serpent (Miller 29-31). Regardless of the view taken, ceremonially buried art was affiliated with another important achievement of the Olmec, their architecture.

The structures at La Venta rose out of the flat, swampy jungle (110 feet at the tallest). The entire site is bilaterally symmetrical eight degrees west of north (see fig. 10). This layout follows others in Mesoamerica: axes determined by astronomical alignment, and a concern for the topographic surroundings. The flute-shaped pyramid of La Venta's highest structure echoes the shape of the ever present volcano (Miller 25-26). A fence of seven-foot tall basalt columns set in adobe bricks once surrounded the compound. The columns were imported from 80 miles away, floated down rivers, then hauled to the site by ropes and hundreds of hands. The care and planning with which this complex was constructed indicates the overall importance it bore in the Olmec's lives. These structures gave the Olmec an unobstructed view of the Rain and Sky God's home. Altars, stelae, and vast courtyards around the mounds demonstrate the use of this site as a place of worship. Few remains of habitation have been found at the site, and they appear to be attributed to the priests who may have cared for the area. The villagers are believed to have lived nearby and journeyed to La Venta only for special occasions (Weaver 53-55).

25

In Mesopotamia, ziggurats were designed as symbolic mountains, providing a transitional space between man and god (Adams 54). The monumental task and cost of construction was justified as the finished product provided a respectful worship place for the supernatural entities. Religion inspired the Mesopotamians to create holy spaces separate from everyday activities, thereby marking the location distinctly different from other structures. Thousands of miles away, the Olmecs exhibited equal needs and abilities as they constructed similar complexes from basalt and granite. The passage of time has left little evidence of their communal dwellings, but the choice of basalt stones again tells us the Olmec temples were meant to

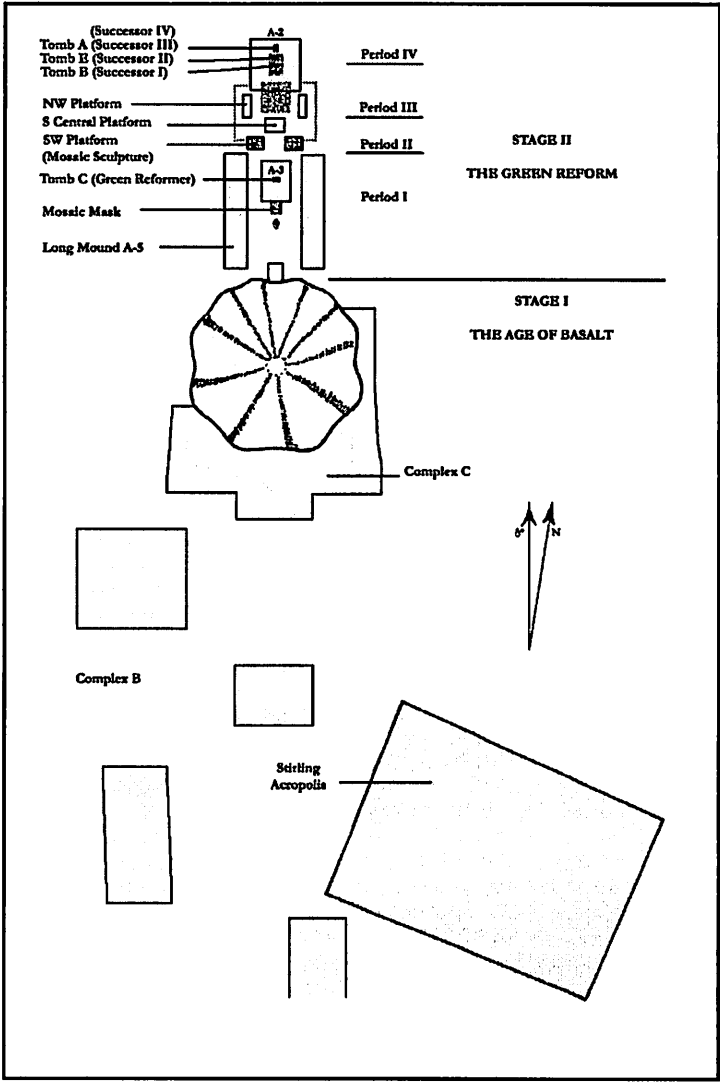


Fig. 10. Historical map of La Venta showing compass orientation. Olmec Religion: A Key to Middle America and Beyond, 30.

endure as symbols of the strength of the Earth Serpent.

Ultimately, it was art that was defaced and buried during shifts of power between Olmec lords, and eventually, between different locations as one site died off and another developed. There was a segment of each neighboring society which understood the implied threat of religious creations from the previous ruling body. If the work held no power or significance, it would have been ignored. The destruction of colossal heads (portraits of rulers?), altars, statues, and reliefs were ceremoniously disposed of by those most affected by the image's powers, the priests and chieftains. Charles R. Wicke argued that, "Most likely the priest-chieftains were the sole patrons of the arts. All Olmec art production seems to have been destined for them; Olmec art is hieratic as contrasted to peasant art." "Where Olmec art occurs the presence of priest patrons for it can be inferred." (Wicke 164-166). In other words, the abundance of Olmec art and architecture was designed and made to serve the needs of the ruling body, and the purpose of the art was to support the religion of those priests as they imposed their will over the illiterate peasant class. There is little doubt left that even in a primitive society, religion played a fundamental role in artistic endeavors.

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In both Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, and Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*, a woman becomes lost in a world where she is oppressed by her family and society. In both stories the women are faced with the same difficult situations, but the choices they make are what prove to be the decision between life and death.

Nora, from *A Doll's House*, like Edna, from *The Awakening*, had children in her marriage, but the way she viewed them was quite different. Nora believed that she would "poison" her children if she stayed in the home, so she left them, because she loved them. Edna, on the other hand, felt overcome by her children, because they "... appeared before her like antagonists ..." (Chopin 115) so she left them to relieve herself. Nora's selfless outlook and Edna's subjective attitude towards their children foreshadowed their differing outcomes.

Another trial that both Nora and Edna dealt with was their husbands' oppression and the opinions of the society of how they, as wives, should act. When Nora said, "I've been your doll wife," (Ibsen 63) she was feeling oppressed by her husband, but she never would have cheated on him because she feared what "people might think ..." (Ibsen 59). Edna, on the other hand, also felt oppressed so she left her husband and the relationship they had together, which was until that point, "resembling many other marriages which masquerade as decrees of fate," (Chopin 18) to run off with another man. The way these women viewed and acted in their relationships and places in society, is another way in which they dealt with situations placed upon them, effecting the end of their "old lives."

A way in which their outlooks were similar, was their relationship with the sea. Both of the women when contemplating suicide found that the sea was where they wanted to die. The women's impression of their departure into the sea is what sets

them apart yet again. Nora finds this a desperate, last resort, because she sees the sea as being “. . . black, cold, icy water.”(Ibsen 58) Edna views the sea in a different light, as “stretched out before her, gleaming with the million lights of the sun” (Chopin 115). The different views of Nora and Edna towards the sea, and of suicide, are foreshadowing what life altering decisions they are going to make.

The most overwhelming difference between the rational, but idealistic Nora, and the pessimistic, confused Edna, is the way they decide to end their “old lives.” Nora decided in the end not to kill herself, but instead, to prove that she could be a complete, strong person without her husband. Edna, on the other hand, did not meet the same fate as Nora. Instead, Edna dove herself into the grave of water, thereby freeing herself from her husband, and her life of oppression. By choosing to end her life, Edna gave up a precious right she had to open her eyes and “awaken” from the shackles of her marriage, and motherhood to become just herself. The final decision between life and death came from decisions that were made to circumstance that arose throughout the two stories.

In the end it was Nora, who despite her struggles being the same as Edna, made the positive decision in allowing herself an opportunity at a new, oppression-free life. Edna, on the other hand, made a negative decision by choosing death. By examining the two stories, and how Nora and Edna, under the same situations dealt with it in different ways, one can clearly discover that decisions made within a life, determine how it will be completed.

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What do you think of when you hear the word “prostitute?” Does it conjure up visions of Richard Gere and Julia Roberts shopping on Rodeo Drive? How about a Hollywood happening featuring Hugh Grant, Charlie Sheen and the Heidi Fleiss elite? Or perhaps a sly wink from the Mayflower Madame as she takes afternoon tea at the Waldorf?

Unfortunately, these Hollywood stereotypes couldn’t be further from the truth. Prostitution is sad, painful and often one of the only alternatives available to many women, nearly all of them tragic victims of childhood sexual, physical and emotional abuse. They are some of America’s most misunderstood and marginalized citizens, caught in a downward spiral of ugly and violent addictions.

Prostitutes are mothers, daughters and sisters of loved ones. They are routinely murdered, beaten, broken, robbed, raped, defecated on, urinated on, shot, stabbed, thrown from moving cars, left for dead in alleys and dumpsters; society just doesn’t seem to care. Society seems to believe they “have it coming,” and many of them believe it too.

#### Big Business

Forget tech stocks and blue chips. According to the November 22, 1993 issue of *U.S. News & World Report*, the behind-the-scenes business of prostitution rakes in about \$40 million in revenue every day—that’s \$14.6 billion every year—thanks to the collective efforts of between 500,000 and 2 million working prostitutes in the U.S.

Prostitution’s not limited to the shady back alleyways of big cities either. Today’s sex trade offers opportunities in communities of all shapes and sizes although patterns vary. The San Francisco-based Prostitutes’ Education Network (PEN) estimates that 20 percent of prostitutes in large cities, and closer to

50 percent in small cities work as on-street prostitutes as opposed to off-street prostitutes such as those who work for massage parlors, escort services and brothels. Most street prostitutes are female, with the exception of in larger cities, where PEN estimates up to 25 percent of prostitutes on the street may be male or transgender.

In an article in the summer 1999 issue of *Sociological Perspectives*, Monica Prasad defines prostitution as “a cultural practice (that) describes the line between what is given as a gift, and what may be exchanged as a commodity.” Gayle Gamauf McCoy, MSW LCSW, executive director of Genesis House, a recovery residence and outreach initiative for female street prostitutes in Chicago, defines prostitution as “trading sex, sexual favors or sex acts for something . . . money, drugs, booze, a ride, or even a place to sleep.” Sergeant Lorraine Shore of the Anchorage Police Department (APD) in Alaska generally agrees with these definitions. But she points out that many of the high risk lifestyle women she has dealt with in her eight years on the force may engage in these practices, but not recognize themselves as “prostitutes” per se, because they don’t request and receive payment for sex in dollars and cents.

An article by Bonnie Bullough in the 1996 *Annual Review of Sex Research* adds to this thought, saying “prostitution has often been called the world’s oldest profession, but it might be more accurate to say that, in a male dominated world, prostitution was almost the only way that many women, lacking a husband, father, or brother to support or protect them, were able to survive. It is perhaps the most extreme form of a double standard and has been justified by the male establishment as a way of preserving the virginity of their daughters, and separating the ‘good women’ (the proper wife and mother) from the ‘bad women’ (those who serve their sexual needs).”

#### Costs to Society

The business of street prostitution creates significant direct and indirect costs for local governments and society. Direct expenses include costs of community policing, court system



costs, and incarceration costs. According to the 1996 Final Report of the City of San Francisco Task Force on Prostitution, these direct costs to taxpayers in the city of San Francisco alone total \$7.6 million each year. In comparison, PEN estimates these annual costs to total \$1 million in Memphis, and \$23 million in New York City. Note that none of these totals reflect related health and social services costs.

Indirect costs can best be described as missed opportunities. Consider what police are not doing when they are patrolling prostitution strolls. Consider the future outlook and potential costs to society for another generation of neglected and abused children. Consider the threats of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. Consider the negative effect on real estate values in neighborhoods where prostitutes operate. Consider society's loss of income tax contributions from prostitutes without legal, taxable employment. And finally, consider the personal and emotional costs to prostitutes themselves. With these many direct and indirect costs in focus, it is clear to see that prostitution is not the "victimless crime" that many people believe it is.

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#### A Matter of Choice?

According to Genesis House, the victimization of prostitutes starts early in life. Their experience shows that nearly all women in prostitution were childhood victims of sexual, physical, and emotional abuse who left home as teenagers to escape this abuse. Most are high school dropouts, and all of the women who seek service and support from Genesis House have a substance addiction and problems with low self-esteem. Of the women who seek assistance from Genesis House, 60 percent are African Americans, 30 percent are white Americans, and 10 percent are other Americans.

This profile rings true with other studies and findings. *U.S. News & World Report's* November 22, 1993 issue cites 14 as the average age of entry into prostitution. The 1996 San Francisco Task Force on Prostitution points to youths as an extremely vulnerable population, conceding that most if not all of them

are forced to survive on their own to escape violent and abusive family situations. The report explains and elaborates on this social exchange theory in that the danger these teens face on the streets may be less than the dangers they face at home. In addition, they are complicated by legal restrictions based on age, especially in employment and housing. The result is that this population has even fewer options available to them than their adult counterparts, and they are inevitably forced into survival sex and the underground economy.

An article in the August 1998 issue of *Violence Against Women* states that “although prostitution is often described as the behavior of consenting adults, Portland’s Sexual Exploitation Education Project (SEEP) argues that prostituted women, many of whom are not adults, are often coerced by pimps or compelled by dire economic circumstances that make true consent impossible . . . others face abusive home environments, should they leave the streets. Many prostituted women also have histories of childhood physical and sexual abuse (78 and 85 percent respectively), an issue that further erodes the idea that women choose prostitution freely or because they enjoy it.”

Genesis House’s Gayle Gamauf McCoy agrees, and adds bluntly “few people would want to drop to their knees in the snow, and perform oral sex on a stranger for five dollars.”

An article by Donald Suggs in the January 6, 1998 issue of *Village Voice* acknowledges that while a host of problems keeps women in prostitution, it is nearly always poverty, abuse and neglect that draws them in. Suggs quotes a 25-year-old woman who grew up surrounded by substance abuse and started working as a prostitute when she was age 14 as saying “You need to feed yourself, and you don’t know how to make money any other way. It doesn’t require skills, and you don’t need any references.” Even New York City’s famous Mayflower Madame, Sydney Biddle Barrows, admits becoming involved in the prostitution business as a receptionist for an escort service as a result of financial pressures during a period of unemployment



despite her blue-blood background and college education, according to an article in the September 1997 issue of *Biography* magazine.

Prostitution is also becoming recognized as an addiction in and of itself. The February 15, 1993 issue of *The Alberta Report Newsmagazine* features a story about prostitution as an addiction, and introduces readers to Chris Walker, a former prostitute and founder of Vancouver-based Prostitutes Anonymous Canada. Ms. Walker says prostitutes have "all the same addictions" as drug addicts, and that the habit is just as hard to break. Ms. Walker was sexually abused as a child and "grew up believing sex was the one and only thing she was good at." She tried to shake her past by earning a college degree and securing a job in computers, but felt out of place. "I thought I didn't deserve to be there," she recalled and a year later, signed on with an escort service.

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The emotional pressure of hooking took its toll on Ms. Walker. She turned to liquor, and then drugs, and became thoroughly addicted. Ten months after joining Narcotics Anonymous, she suffered a mental breakdown. She said prostitution also left her with a "sexual dysfunction and an eating disorder."

This comes as no surprise. In the January 1997 issue of the *American Journal of Public Health*, Robert Schilling and Nabila El-Bassel report that a study they conducted revealed that drug using women who regularly trade sex for drugs had significantly higher mean scores of psychological distress than those not trading sex. Gayle Gamauf McCoy adds that her experience has taught her that prostitution "takes a terrifying emotional toll on women. It tears down their self-esteem, and reinforces all the hurt and abuse they suffered as children. It's revictimization, yet it's a lifestyle that can become as addictive as drugs."

In *The Alberta Report Newsmagazine* article, Jody Williams, founder of the Los Angeles-based Prostitutes Anonymous said she became aware of the cycle of addiction when she spoke with prostitutes who had quit, married and landed good jobs,



but eventually returned to the street. "Prostitutes are misunderstood, misdiagnosed and mistreated just like alcoholics were 70 years ago. We know it's an addiction. By approaching it that way, we're finding recovery."

Some residents of Chicago's Genesis House share similar recollections:

~ Prostitution is a sickness of its own, like cancer. When I first started to work the street, my 11-month-old girl was murdered by my pimp. So I wouldn't have to face this reality, I started using drugs.

~ There was no hope for me. I was homeless, smoking crack, a winehead.

36 ~ I am a sexual abuse survivor. I think the most damage that it did was to teach me that my sexuality was the only thing that was important about me. The only thing that had any worth attached to it.

~ My husband and I were unemployed. We both started using drugs and my husband became very abusive. He started pushing me to the streets, to prostitution, so as to make money to support our drug habit. The more I resisted, the more he beat me.

But "there are more factors involved in turning to prostitution than simply economic survival," says Bonnie Bullough in the 1996 *Annual Review of Sex Research*. Her review of available prostitution research reveals a number of common factors in the backgrounds of prostitutes besides poor living conditions and unhealthy neighborhoods. These included neglected homes, inadequate education, low levels of intelligence, ignorance of sexual matters or early coercive sex experiences including incest. In addition, she cites a 1980 study by Rubinstein that reported prostitutes "had less accessibility to an attachment figure and more separation experiences than the comparison group."

Likewise, in a report by Susan Nadon and Catherine Koverola in the April 1998 *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, "prostitution is not a voluntary activity, but one that more real-



istically involves young people running from abusive or rejecting homes,” and then becoming caught in a desperate and degrading system. The article summarizes an extensive study of research data and concludes that these factors are well documented as antecedents to prostitution: childhood sexual abuse, childhood physical abuse, leaving home, poor family functioning, parental violence, parental alcohol abuse, adolescent alcohol and/or drug use and low adolescent self-esteem.

Bullough also contends that “feminists would deny that prostitution, no matter how defined, could be accepted as free choice by any woman. Prostitution, from the feminist point of view, represents an extreme case of sexual stratification in which the commodization of female sexuality contributes to the devaluation and objectification of women. If the problem is to empower women and give them greater free choice, the question then becomes what is free choice.” The article continues by saying that “prostitution is female sexual slavery, whether it be legalized, regulated or tolerated.”

#### Violence in the Void

Life as a street prostitute is far from easy. Residents and clients of Chicago's Genesis House all report having been regular victims of rape and physical violence. PEN studies quantify this violence, reporting that 80 percent of street prostitutes surveyed reported being physically assaulted, and some reported being raped between eight and 10 times or more a year. PEN studies also reveal that 60 percent of abuse against street prostitutes is perpetrated by clients, 20 percent by people identifying themselves as police officers, and 20 percent in domestic relationships; and less than four percent of this violence is reported to the police.

A similar survey of prostitutes conducted as part of the 1995 San Francisco Bay Area Homeless Project revealed 80 percent of the prostitutes it surveyed had been physically assaulted, 43 percent attacked by clients, 66 percent raped and 78 percent threatened with a weapon. In addition, 84 percent reported being homeless at one time.

Genesis House Executive Director Gayle Gamauf McCoy reports that the Chicago Police Department believes that since 1990, prostitutes in Chicago have been murdered at higher rates than in previous years. In addition, those who are substance abusers are being killed at a higher rate than those who are not, and those who are addicted to crack cocaine are being murdered at the highest rate, compared to those who use other drugs.

“It’s not hard to understand,” says McCoy. “Prostitutes are easy targets. They’re visible, available and cooperative. Every time they agree to get in a car or walk down a dark alley with a stranger, they’re putting themselves in danger.”

One resident of Genesis House confessed “I’ve been shot four times, stabbed, beaten up, my arm was broken. The final straw was when a trick pushed me out of a car that was going 40 miles per hour.”

An article by Katherine DePasquale entitled “The Effects of Prostitution” at [www.feminista.com](http://www.feminista.com) on October 24, 2000 found that:

~ The Council for Prostitution Alternatives reports that prostitutes are raped approximately once each week.

~ A Canadian report on Prostitution and Pornography finds that women and girls in prostitution have a mortality rate 40 times higher than the national average.

~ Women and transgender prostitutes experience significantly more violence (rapes and physical assaults) than male prostitutes. To be female, or perceived as female, is to be more intensely targeted for violence.

An article in the August 1998 issue of the *Violence Against Women* journal simply states that “the working conditions of street prostitutes is intolerable. Prostitutes are frequent victims of violent crime, including beating, rape and murder, most of which is never reported to police.” This same article stated that, according to Portland’s Sexual Exploitation Education Project (SEEP), 78 percent of the prostitutes they surveyed reported being victims of rape and 84 percent victims of assault. These



rape victims reported an average of 46 rapes per year.

An article by John Lowman in the September 2000 issue of *Violence Against Women* cites 1996 Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics that illustrate how "some occupations involve more personal risk to personal safety than others." For example, from 1991 to 1995, six police officers were victims of homicide. In comparison, 18 taxi cab drivers were murdered, and 56 known prostitutes were murdered. Thirty-one of the women were strangled, beaten or stabbed. In seven of the 14 stabbing cases, police used the term "overkill" to describe the attack. In other words, the force used was far greater than necessary to bring about the victim's death. Several victims were stabbed 30 to 40 times, one was stabbed 99 times. Three victims were mutilated and dismembered. As of December 1994, there were seven convictions and a clearance rate of 27 percent. By contrast, from 1986 through 1997, the Canadian clearance rate for murder fluctuated between 77 and 85 percent.

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Lowman explains that most prostitutes experience numerous "bad dates" involving assaults, rapes, and robberies by clients or men posing as clients, and that he believes there are two categories of offenders: situational and predatory.

According to Lowman, situational violence is not premeditated, and occurs when a dispute arises during the course of a transaction and the client resorts to violence to resolve it.

Lowman explains that predatory violence is premeditated. It may be financially motivated (a planned robbery), and it may be misogynistic, sexual and serial. The offender is not a client as such, because he sets out with a different agenda. He knows what he is going to do before he does it, and he knows where to find victims, the unregulated and mostly unmonitored prostitution strolls. The choice of a prostitute as a target is, at least partly, a matter of opportunity, because street prostitutes will get into a car with a stranger.

Predatory sexual violence against prostitutes is termed misogynistic (i.e. hateful toward women) because, as one 31-year veteran of the Vancouver Police Department put it, the

maliciousness and viciousness of some of the sexual assaults and murders is "beyond belief." He described the behavior of many of the men who assault female prostitutes as "very physical . . . very intimate . . . and designed to hurt."

According to Lowman, "as to the extent to which violence against prostitutes is a matter of violence against women in general rather than prostitutes in particular, too much of an analytic separation should be resisted. Several of the men convicted of sexually assaulting prostitutes in BC had convictions for assaulting or murdering other women too. In light of these cases, violence against prostitutes ought to be understood as part of a continuum of violence against women more generally. Nevertheless, it is likely that some men are more easily able to rationalize violence against prostitutes than against other women because of prostitutes' moral-political marginalization. The de facto criminal prohibition of prostitution plays a major part in this marginalization. The emphasis in many cities to rid the streets of prostitutes allows violence against prostitutes to flourish."

Gayle Gamauf McCoy agrees and points out that "police and community efforts to displace prostitutes and clean up certain neighborhood streets result in sending prostitutes into darker, more dangerous streets and alleyways."

On this subject, APD Sergeant Lorraine Shore says that, based on her experience, she believes there are definitely predators who deliberately and routinely target women with high risk lifestyles. "Over and over again, because they know they can get away with it, because they know these women probably won't report the crime, and if they do, they know no one will believe them. Worse case, they know these women are not likely to be missed or reported missing too quickly. Their actions are about as premeditated as you can get."

Yet, it's the women involved in prostitution who are being arrested. An article in the August 1998 issue of the *Violence Against Women* journal quotes SEEP Program Director Peter Qualliotine "SEEP follows the lead of the anti-rape and anti-



domestic violence movements in rejecting popular understandings of gender issues that tend to blame the victims. . . . Why is all of our attention as a society, as a community, focused on her (the prostitute) rather than on the person who is actually making a free choice and has the power of control and has the ability to stop (ie., the male customer) . . . this is not a victimless crime, it's not a victimless form of entertainment."

In an article by Brad Knickerbocker in the October 23, 1996 issue of the *Christian Science Monitor*, a woman named Angel Cassidy is referenced. She was sexually abused as a young girl before spending 12 years as a prostitute, and was quoted as saying "There was a time when I would have told you I was on the streets because I wanted to be, but it wasn't true. It just was not true."

In this same article, Knickerbocker identifies pimps as coercive and abusive, "far from providing 'protection,' these men typically dominate and often violently abuse the women who work for them. In many cases, pimps introduce young women to addictive drugs, which can help turn an already dependent relationship into virtual slavery. Of the women in the Portland Council for Prostitution Alternatives, most of whom had worked for pimps, 93 percent had been assaulted and 78 percent had attempted suicide."

Gayle Gamauf McCoy elaborates. "If a woman is working for a pimp, not meeting her daily earnings quota usually results in a beating. Often times, a woman is more likely to risk a suspicious client than face such a painful penalty. And when a woman does have a bad date, her pimp will probably not be sympathetic, will probably blame her for her own misfortune, and may even brutalize her further if the bad date meant she didn't make her quota."

In some cases, pimps can be a young woman's own parents. One such girl is quoted in an article by Mark Clayton in the September 13, 1996 issue of *Christian Science Monitor*: "At first, I did it because I felt obligated to my mom. Later, I did it because I had to do it. I was working seven days a week, doing anything

to make them more money.” According to Clayton, when she resisted, she was beaten.

### Perception is Reality

While violence against street prostitutes is serious, widespread, frequent and often severe, experts agree that most of it is not reported to authorities. “Prostitution and prostitutes are misunderstood and marginalized by society,” says Gayle Gamauf McCoy. “As a result, they are often considered second class citizens or criminals who deserve whatever violent ends they meet. Most prostitutes end up believing this too. This is a very defeated population. They’ve been kicked around their whole lives. They’re used to people not supporting them, or not believing them, or even blaming them. So at some point, they figure ‘why bother?’ They just become desensitized to the violence.”

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This cultural acceptance of violence is explained by McCoy. “If they’re raped or assaulted while they’re doing something they perceive to be socially unacceptable, like prostituting or drugs, they accept the violence as part of the package, as a justifiable consequence of their actions. However, if they are victimized when they’re sober or when they’re not prostituting, they tend to see the violence as criminal and are more likely to report it.”

After interviewing and studying street prostitutes, Dr. Maggie O’Neill stated in an article published in the 1996 *Austrian Journal of Sociology* that most prostitutes report experiencing regular violence defined as verbal and physical intimidation, bullying, rapes, beatings and murder. She noted that they perceive male violence to be “an endemic aspect of the daily working life of female prostitutes,” and speak of this violence “in a very matter of fact way.”

Even the 1996 San Francisco Task Force on Prostitution reported having difficulty in gathering anonymous testimony from prostitutes about abuse and violence from clients, street violence, attacks by men who target prostitutes, and even by the police because prostitutes “were afraid of reprisals from police



if they came forward.”

The report elaborates that for many prostitutes, being labeled as a criminal jeopardizes a woman’s custody of her children. The fear of losing their children, their homes, legitimate jobs and other relationships forces prostitutes to keep silent and not report the violence they experience on the street. The report adds that “if prostitutes knew they would not be arrested for reporting crime, they would not fear claiming their civil rights.”

Gayle Gamauf McCoy adds that “for many, pending bench warrants from previous arrests or perhaps illegal immigration status are reasons to maintain a low profile. In addition, most street prostitutes simply do not trust police because they’ve had bad experiences with police.”

A PEN report entitled *Police Abuse of Prostitutes in San Francisco* cites verbal abuse as the most frequent of alleged police abuses followed closely by requests for sex in lieu of arrest. The report notes that these allegations are the most difficult to verify for purposes of complaint, and adds that critics say the abuse is due to a police department culture that dehumanizes prostitutes.

An official in the probation department is quoted anonymously as saying “rookie cops start out treating the hookers with normal respect, but it doesn’t take long for them to see they can treat them like shit and get away with it.” It’s a way for them to pass along a lot of the disrespect they have to put up with on the streets. They take it out on the people who aren’t in a position to defend themselves. A member of the public defender’s office believes it to be a system-wide problem, and says “prostitutes get absolutely no respect in the criminal justice system. I’ve been in courtrooms where lawyers with prostitutes as clients will make jokes about hookers and everybody will laugh along.”

The problem is not limited to members of the criminal justice system. It seems fair to say that most of society tends to blame these victims or otherwise hold them in contempt. For



example, when asked if people would believe a female street prostitute who claimed that a customer or potential customer had raped her, a solid 100 percent of University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) students questioned said no, people would not believe her. This goes along with APD Sergeant Randy Carroll's comment that "unfortunately for them (prostitutes), people think if the check bounces, it's rape."

Hollywood's glamorous visions of prostitutes were not at all apparent in the results of this informal survey of 26 UAA students. When asked to describe a female street prostitute, 75 percent responded with negative labels and adjectives, 15 percent with sympathetic terms, and 10 percent with neutral assessments even though 40 percent of the males and 50 percent of the females reported that they had never even seen a real prostitute.

Sixty-seven percent of males and 58 percent of females surveyed thought of street prostitutes as criminals. The most popular descriptions characterized prostitutes as sleazy, slutty and whore-ish; without morals, class or manners; dressed in tacky, sexy, skimpy outfits with too much make-up; dirty, gross, nasty, skanky and ugly; rude, bold and show-offy; wild, like to party and like sex.

When asked why they thought women worked as street prostitutes, 85 percent of the responses were negative, 11 percent were sympathetic and 4 percent were neutral. The most popular answers illustrate a perception that prostitutes are dumb and lazy, and that prostitution is an easy way to make a buck.

In an article by Mark Clayton in the September 13, 1996 issue of *Christian Science Monitor*, a child advocate shared her anger over young women trapped or lured into prostitution being called prostitutes. "These young women are victims of abuse. They are sexually abused children, but the minute a kid is persuaded by a pimp to stand on the street, society denies them their rights." The article continues by claiming that society sees women in prostitution as having made a choice, and this



permits society to demonize them for the alleged choice and to feel it can write them off. A law professor at the University of Minnesota adds "these kids have run away from sexual or physical abuse at home. They find themselves on the streets, offered food and housing in exchange for sex. What kind of choice is that?"

These perceptions often cripple the ability of authorities to bring violent offenders to justice. APD Sergeant Lorraine Shore believes that unsympathetic juries can often be the biggest obstacle. "If a case goes to court, you can be sure the district attorney has a 110 percent case," says Shore. "Trials are too expensive to risk anything short of a solid case, so when juries come back and say these defendants are innocent, it boggles your mind. It's very disappointing. It shows they're not a jury of peers. They're making judgments based on their own ideas and perceptions, and they can't begin to comprehend what life on the streets is like. It's the 'bad victim' perception." Gayle Gamauf McCoy adds that "at Genesis House, we find that society doesn't look at prostitutes as real people. People can't imagine that 'real' people live like this. They consider prostitutes to be outcasts and bad people. They're looked down upon. Nobody wants them in their neighborhood, and very few want to invest in their rehabilitation. They just want them gone. They never stand a chance with a jury."

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That's if they show up for the trial. Shore adds "because most prostitutes are street people, they don't have a reliable address, they don't wear a watch, they don't keep a calendar, and they've got drug and alcohol addictions that keep them displaced and disoriented. They are extremely unreliable witnesses—even in their own defense." Shore explained "they often miss court appearances, they hide important facts, and they change their stories because they're afraid they'll be arrested or no one will believe them."

For these reasons, in Sergeant Shore's experience, very few cases of rape or physical violence against women with high risk lifestyles go to court. "Either the offender pleads out to a less-

er charge, or the case fizzles out because the victim doesn't come through." The criminal justice system needs to have a victim in order to prosecute a crime. "Either way," says Shore, "the offenders don't get properly penalized, and they learn they can get away with it."

PEN reports on a highly publicized case that occurred in the San Francisco area where police released a torture-rapist because the victim was a prostitute. The victim reported initial support and sympathy from the police officers, but after the arrest, the district attorney refused to proceed with the case, despite strong physical evidence, stating that "because she was a prostitute, it would be difficult to prove that it wasn't consensual." He added that "no jury would believe her."

Judges also play an important role in the process. "Some understand and are sympathetic," says Gayle Gamauf McCoy. "The judges who participate in Genesis House's ASPIRE (Alternative Sentencing Program Imagining Real Empowerment) counseling program are terrific examples. They give women a chance to change instead of just sending them off to the penalty box for another 30 days."

Some judges are not so understanding, and McCoy recalls one public defender telling her about a client arrested for prostitution who was unable to make bail. The judge gave her two hours to "get out there and get the money." It was unspoken, but the public defender felt strongly that everyone present knew he was suggesting that her client should prostitute herself quickly and in the neighborhood in order to pay her bail. She added "that's why insiders know the two blocks surrounding Cook County criminal court are an easy place to find prostitutes. They're either fresh out of the cell, drug sick and desperate, or they're trying to drum up bail."

#### Going Forward: Thoughts About Decriminalization and Escape Routes

There's a reason that prostitution is known as "the world's oldest profession." The social problems that fuel prostitution are ages old, and too big to solve with any one idea, program



or pen stroke. But a start might be for society to recognize the true plight of street prostitutes, and shift its approach from treating them as criminals to treating them as victims.

According to the article by John Lowman in the September 2000 *Violence Against Women* journal, "the prohibition and stigmatization of prostitution are the main obstacles to creating safer working conditions for prostitutes," and the system of criminalization contributes to the marginalization of prostitutes in several ways:

~It contributes to legal structures that tend to make the prostitute responsible for her own victimization, and thus reinforces the line of argument that says that if people choose to prostitute, they deserve what they get—they are offenders not victims.

~ It makes prostitution part of an illicit market. As such, it is left to primitive market forces and creates an environment in which brutal forms of manager-exploitation can take root.

~ It encourages the convergence of prostitution with other illicit markets, particularly the drug trade. Once the price of a habit-forming, mind-altering substance is driven up by criminal prohibition, a drug like heroin can be as demanding a "pimp" as any man.

~ It alienates persons who prostitute from the protective service potential of the police. Why would prostitutes turn to the police for help when the police are responsible for enforcing laws against prostitutes? For a prostitute, to report an assault or robbery might entail admitting that she was committing an offense or violating bail or probation restrictions. Criminal law sanctions institutionalize an adversarial relationship between prostitutes and police.

The 1996 San Francisco Task Force on Prostitution Final Report notes that "the current institutional perspective on prostitution can be summed up in one word: prosecution. Most health and social services are secondary to . . . the enforcement and prosecution of soliciting crimes." It continues "although the arrest and prosecution of soliciting crimes has increased

dramatically over the last few years, the incidence of street prostitution shows no signs of subsiding.”

The Task Force concluded with a recommendation that the city “stop enforcing and prosecuting prostitution crimes . . . that the department instead focus on the quality of life infractions about which neighborhoods complain and redirect funds from prosecution, public defense, court time, legal system overhead and incarceration toward services and alternatives for needy constituencies.” Some of its specific recommendations included:

- ~ Immediately stop enforcing and prosecuting misdemeanor and felony prostitution laws.

- ~ Dismiss all current prosecutions and reallocate resources.

- ~ Vigorously enforce laws against coercion, blackmail, kidnapping, restraining individual's freedom of movement, fraud, rape and violence regardless of the victim's status as a sex worker.

- ~ Redirect resources allocated to police investigation, incarceration, prosecution and defense of sex workers to augment resources for housing, outreach and other services for these populations.

- ~ Provide access to a full range of health care services, including drug treatment programs.

- ~ Provide adequate resources for services to battered women, the homeless, youth, immigrants and refugees, and those needing rape crisis services.

- ~ With the revenue made available by eliminating law enforcement budgets, support current and develop new peer-guided programs and services. These should include outreach, including mobile outreach, drop-in centers, and low threshold emergency and transitional housing. Programs should include occupational and educational programs, health and other programs for those who continue working as prostitutes as well as those who wish to transition into other occupations, including financial assistance to escape abusive and violent situations.



~ Provide in-service training to health and social service workers who work with prostitutes to increase sensitivity and accessibility of services.

~ Provide training to police and sheriff's department personnel to eliminate harassment and abuse of prostitutes by law enforcement officials.

~ Provide training to improve the ability of the district attorney's office to successfully prosecute cases of rape and other assault in which prostitutes are the victims.

The study added that it found "economic development and services for low income and poor people in San Francisco improve conditions in the neighborhoods with the long-term effect of reducing prostitution."

A needs assessment survey conducted as part of the 1995 San Francisco Bay Area Homeless Project clearly illustrates these services are in demand. Seventy-eight percent of prostitutes surveyed said they want a home or safe place, 73 percent want job training, 67 percent want drug and alcohol treatment, 50 percent want peer counseling, 50 percent want self defense training, and another 50 percent want healthcare and report serious health problems.

Progressive clinical treatment programs like Chicago's Genesis House have made important differences in women's lives. In 1999 alone, Genesis House was able to leverage its almost \$2 million annual operating budget to house and supervise 14 full time residents. Six graduated successfully into lives of healthy well being, succeeding at new jobs and moving into independent housing. Four more subsequently graduated.

The recovery residence also welcomed and assisted 480 drop-in and crisis clients, offering food, clothing, short-term shelter, emergency referrals and assistance with substance abuse, long-term shelter and more.

Its west side facility provided 500 women with HIV education, HIV prevention assistance, minor medical service and hospitality services that ranged from a hot cup of coffee to arrangements for open heart surgery.

Through its court outreach program, 1,450 women were provided with rehabilitative counseling as an alternative to incarceration. Active on-the-street outreach efforts provided non-judgmental contact, HIV education, and HIV prevention assistance to approximately 5,500 women and men.

Because so many of its clients are served anonymously, it is difficult for Genesis House to define and track its success. Residential program clients, however, often keep in contact with Genesis House after graduation, and can be tracked at a 60 percent success rate.

PEN reports that it costs local governments an average of \$2,000 every time a prostitute is arrested. A 1987 research paper published in the *Hastings Law Journal* reported that nearly 70 percent of all women in all jails had been arrested at least once for prostitution. Genesis House reports that it costs society around \$32,000 to incarcerate a woman for one year while it costs agencies like theirs \$14,000 to \$17,000 a year to rehabilitate a woman involved in prostitution.

“Communities and prostitutes would be much better served if they would just shift some of the money they spend on arresting and incarcerating prostitutes to rehabilitating them,” says Gayle Gamauf McCoy. “In Chicago, the fees paid to police by johns who have their cars towed during sting operations totals over \$1 million a year. That money alone could increase Genesis House's reach and impact by 50 percent.”

Men who use prostitutes, according to the 1995 San Francisco Bay Area Homeless Project, are an average age of 36, 89 percent are employed, and 50 percent are married or cohabitating.

In an article by Brad Knickerbocker in the October 23, 1996 issue of the *Christian Science Monitor*, he states “experts warn that the problem will not be solved until prostitution is seen as an attack on basic human rights, and until many men change their attitude toward women. Critics of current police practices note that while both buying and selling sex are illegal in the U.S. (except for a few counties in Nevada) only about 10

percent of those arrested in such cases are the male customers. . . . We live in a culture that's male dominated, and it's going to take a long time and a lot of voices before that changes."

In the August 1998 issue of the Violence Against Women journal, "SEEP argues that enforcement efforts should focus on the social actor whose behavior is more clearly of free choice, the john (client). Instead of seeing his behavior as harmless mischief, as reflected by the expression 'boys will be boys,' SEEP sees the client as instrumental in supporting a system of oppression . . . SEEP sees him (the client) as a participant in nonconsensual sex . . . he is a person who takes advantage of a system of inequality for his own benefit."

#### A Leg Up Not a Hand Out

The women of Genesis House have valued its 360-degree, integrated approach to support and assistance. "It's programs like Genesis House that will get women off the streets and keep them off the streets," says Gayle Gamauf McCoy, "and isn't that what everyone wants?" In their words, the residents and graduates agree:

~ Even when I was a little girl of 13, I knew there ought to be a place for street girls like me to be loved. People like you (Genesis House) are the only reason I know there's a God. You held me in your arms like my mother should have done years ago.

~ When I was in the hospital, I remembered the (Genesis House) outreach people. They just told me, 'when you're tired (of this lifestyle), come on in.' This place did not turn me away. They didn't say anything bad to me. They gave me a chance to like myself.

~ I looked in the mirror for the first time in my life today. Because of Genesis House, I finally could really look at myself. I mean, I always looked so I could fix my hair and makeup to go out and get dates, but I never looked at who I was. I didn't want to see. But I did it today, and I cried because I liked what I saw. I never thought that'd be possible—to like what I saw looking back at me.



~ Genesis House stood beside me and helped me to realize I am an intelligent woman, and that many of the answers I seek are indeed within myself. Now, instead of running away from the chaos, I can deal with it as an adult. Genesis House helped me overcome the guilt I felt for the abuse which was inflicted upon me. I know that I will make it, because I am a survivor and because Genesis House taught me to be.

~ I've been clean for three years, but Genesis House is still important to me. It's my lifeline. It's my home and family. I know when I'm feeling like I might go back over the edge, and it's coming to Genesis House and just spending time talking that pulls me back. It reminds me life is good.

~ I consider you (Genesis House) real friends. I'll make you proud for going to bat for me. It means a lot.

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*This paper is written in a journalistic style and is based on sociological theories, an extensive review of literature, personal interviews with professionals, and an informal survey of 26 UAA undergraduate students.*





Kodiak in late fall. It had snowed the night before, a hard furious storm out of the northeast that left thigh high drifts between the bumpers of the pickup trucks parked next to the Harbormaster building, and set the flags out front snapping with a sound like beaten rugs. By morning, the autumn that had lingered was gone, and the sky was suddenly the cold depthless blue of midwinter. The few remaining leaves on the cottonwood trees in front of the Russian Church had blown off during the night and scattered down the alley between Tony's Bar and Kraft's Groceries like yellow scraps of torn ricepaper.

The 1975 tanner crab season had started a few weeks before, but I had been off the island then, down in America, spending the last of my money from September king crab fishery. When I got back, I threw my sleeping bag in a cabin out on Mill Bay Road, and drank at night downtown, asking about jobs. The night of the storm someone in Tony's mentioned the *Madre Dolorosa* needed a deckhand, so in the morning I walked into town, the road clean and white between the four foot berms the plows had left, the sunshine glinting off the hard patches in the road, the wind gusting cross Lily Lake between the trailers there, worrying the worn pieces of aluminum trim on the eaves into a hollow arrhythmic rattle. The ravens watched me from the telephone wires, their eyes like black pearls, their iridescent feathers riffling in the wind.

The harbor spread out at least at the foot of the long slope down from Borough Hill, the white peaks surrounding the dark water in the harbor, and the morning jet from Anchorage, a small sharp object five minutes away, settled slowly down into the airport at the base of Barometer Mountain, a silent puff of snow as the tires hit. Gusts of wind piled over the top of Pillar Mountain and blew the summit bare, white streamers of snow

Murray Gellis. Merchant Mariner

hanging out like jet contrails a thousand feet above the town. The wind tore at the stream from the processing plants, pulled at the rigging of the boats, tied along the faces of the docks, and then spread out on the water in dark cat's paw swirls, swinging the water into whitecaps. Crystals of snow dropped down in the lee of the mountain onto Cannery Row, sparkling in the bright sunlight and falling down the front of my sweat-shirt. I looked for the boat, a white 58 foot limit seiner, and found it on the second finger in the small boat harbor, the tie up lines tight against the wind.

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The skipper of the *Madre* was a guy named Murray Gellis, and though I'd never met him, I'd heard about him. When I stood on the float next to the boat and called across the deck to the open galley door, asking if anyone was abroad, he came out on deck, dressed in dirty brown insulated Carhart overalls, wiping his hands with an oily rag. Murray was about fifty then, a big guy if you were standing near him, over six feet; and he was starting a belly, but his arms and legs hung loose from his body like a kid. He wore big black frame Woody Allen glasses with thick lenses and he tilted his head back to look at me with green eyes while he wiped his hands. He looked like he could be Woody Allen's older, bigger, more assured brother—big nose, big ears, big grin, brown graying hair hanging down over his forehead, sideburns curling up next to his ears. He was a Bronx Jew and twenty-five years out of New York and yet he still sounded like he lived a few blocks from Yankee Stadium, the Yiddish of his Russian shtetl grandparents still hanging in there behind his teeth.

"Ya lookin' fuhwa job kid? I need somebody but I don't want no greenhaws. Ya know how to coil?" He'd never enunciated an "R" on the end of a word in his whole life, and had a kind of urban nonchalance as he stood there leaning back a little, looking at me out of the bottom of his glasses. I told him I'd fished on the Gladys R for tanners the spring before, and King Crab in September, and he said "Is that it? Two seasons?" We looked at each other. I needed the job. He needed a deck-



hand. "Well fuck it, I guess that's good enough. But ya bettuh know howduh wook. Jerry'll be back in a little bit and he can show yuh the setup on deck. Weah leavin' as soon as the wind comes down, prob'ly tonight. I gotta get groceries in a while, so get your gear and come back down and we'll listen to Peggy's forecast and see what it looks like. You need any gloves or anything?" I told him I needed to make a run through Sutliff's for a few things and I'd be back later. We shook on it, and I walked back up the ramp and across the street to Sutliff's True Value Hardware for gloves and another sweatshirt. The forecast ended up being good enough to leave that night, and we ran the eight hours down the east side, in the lee of the fading northwest wind, down to the 100 fathom curve off Sitkalidak Island where the pots were fishing. We started pulling gear at daylight. All say the mountains of the island stood twenty miles off to the west like a row of carnivorous teeth, white and pure in the cold sunlight, until the sun set behind them and they turned blue, and then really blue as the sky went black and they were lit with starlight. The winter season had begun.

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"I'm tellin' yuh, get the lead outta y'asses, o'wime comin' down and kickin' it out myself!" We heard this kind of thing all day long sometimes, the other deckhand and me, running as fast as we could on the back deck while Murray drove the boat from up on the flying bridge. The first few trips in mid November the other deckhand was a guy named Jerry. He was about twenty-five, maybe five years older than me, and he's come up from Spokane a couple of years ago. He was a serious guy, kind of quiet, and he'd been fishing with Murray since the spring before, and he'd fished before that in other boats, which gave him the edge on me in experience. He never used that over me though, the way he could have. He'd watch me getting frustrated with not being able to keep up with filling the bait jars, or getting the crabs untangled from the web in the pots while Murray hollered down from the flying bridge, but he never said anything. Instead he'd just look at me from under his rain jacket hood and kind of smile to let me know that it didn't matter,

I was doing fine, don't mind Murray, and I was grateful for that. He showed me how to get faster at coiling the crab pot line as it came up through the power block, and how to run the hydraulic controls that ran the block and the boom winch that lifted the pot in to the rack on deck once the side of the boat for the next set of pot buoys, he told me this was his last trip on the *Madre*, he was going out west to the Bering Sea right after Christmas. A brand new 108 foot boat was coming out of the Marco shipyard in Seattle and he was flying down to get it on it and then help drive it up to Dutch Harbor in the Aleutians. It was definitely a step up from the *Madre*. When we got to town he told Murray and Murray was a little bummed, but he shook Jerry's hand and wished him luck. We were standing on the cannery dock watching the last hopper load of crab being hoisted up out of the crab tank. Murray looked at me and said "Well chief, yuh know anybody wants to go out with us?" We made the next trip with a red headed friend of mine, named Dave; I knew him from the B&B Bar. Dave had never fished before and puked the whole trip, almost terminally seasick from weeks of drinking, and things went badly on deck. Murray screamed at us for a week and shitcanned Dave on the dock as soon as we tied up to deliver. I went and got my buddy Brad off of the couch he was living on up in Aleutian Homes and we both lied and told Murray Brad was "real experienced, fished lots of crab." Murray rolled his eyes at this, looked at us with his head tilted back and then looked down, disgusted with the whole situation of dealing with drunks, green guys, idiots, kids. But we all knew he needed a body, anybody, and Brad was sober and present. We left at midnight for the run down to the hundred fathom curve of the Horse's Head gully off Sitkalidak Island, and started pulling gear as soon as it was enough to see the buoys.

The winter ground down into late December and Murray still yelled at us, a nasal honking coming down out of the wind, mixed in with the roaring of the unmuffled engine exhaust stack. But as Brad and I got faster and more coordinated in the



rhythm of pulling the pots and pitching the crabs into the live tank, the edge went out of his voice. And after awhile it became a kind of background noise we became used to and almost comforted by. "Just his own way of communicating," said Brad as he flipped the bird at Murray's back when he turned away from us to go back to the wheel up there on the flying bridge. We began to suspect he secretly kind of liked us, two kids who really only wanted to sleep all the time.

Between strings we lay on the benches in the galley, watching the horizon rise and fall in the plastic Lexan galley windows, our hands behind our heads, our boots hanging over the end of the benches, dripping on the floor. There was an exhaust leak in the stack and the air in the galley would get faintly blue and we would lie there half awake, getting headaches, reading magazines and drinking cocoa. Murray would come down out of the wind and steer the little wooden wheel by hand and the inside engine control strings. It was too small for more than two people at a time to even stand in, watching the bottom sounder to stay on the depth curve, and the radar screen for other boats.

He was always complaining about other guys corking us, sneaking in our gear, putting their own crab pots too close to ours and sucking the crabs away. In town though, everybody else bitched about Murray, that "corkin' motherfucker," for doing it to them first. Sometimes Murray even had us pull somebody else's pot to see how their fishing was, to see if we should put a few pots there ourselves, but we never told anybody in town about it, it was too weird a thing to admit to, especially considering what everybody in the fleet already thought about Murray. A couple times Brad and I considered objecting to pulling somebody else's pot, but we never had the balls to say anything, with Murray leaning over the ladder, looking down at us, while we winched it out of the water and lay it in the rack on the rail, and eyeballed the crabs inside, working up a rough count before pushing it back over. In Tony's one night a guy leaned away from the bar and looked over at me and Brad and

asked if we'd pulled anybody else's pots lately. He laughed when I tried to act indignant. "Listen, I worked for Murray one winter, I know how he is. We know he doesn't keep the crab. But tell him to try setting them back in the same spot so we don't have to drive around looking for the fucking things OK?"

All day Murray stood up on the flying bridge, out in the open wind wearing his Carharts and a green wool hat his wife knit for him, sucking coffee out of a thermos and eating Cadbury Chocolate bars, the tin foil wrappers blowing past us in the sea spray down on deck. We never got any chocolate. The first and last time we asked he said "Buy your own, you fucking cheapskates!" What did we know? We thought all skippers were like that. Between strings we ate bologna sandwiches washed down with Kool-Aid for lunch, and rotated our wet gloves over the drip oil stove so we had at least warm wet gloves to put on once in a while. We counted the pots, trying to figure how many were left in the last string of the day, a string Murray could see out in front of the boat, but that we were blind to, down behind the house on deck. At 8 or 9 or midnight he'd call down "OK boys! That's it! Button her up, and I'll make some dinner. And don't forget to tie that bait box lid shut real good. I ain't gonna be driving all over looking fir the fuckin' lid if it blows off." If it was early enough and we'd pulled everything at least once, or if a blow was coming, or if the wind was already there, kicking solid green water over the rail so we had to hold onto the stanchion post to stay on our feet, and sleep hard without the boat rolling around. But a lot of the time we just drifted off the last pot when Murray's had enough up there in the wind, laying sideways to the wind and rolling like a bathtub so we had to lock our knees and elbows against the bin boards in our bunks to keep from rolling out. All the jars in the cupboard would roll around with a maddening irregularity until somebody got up and wedged paper towels in there. The night would last forever, but it was never long enough when we had to get up in the dark five hours later and put on our wet gear, go out and stand in the wind looking over for that first set of



buoys to come up alongside the boat under the decklights.

Murray was always the cook, and had learned how to make tacos, so that's what we ate mostly, or Rice-a-Roni, "the Santa Flavia treat" Brad called it. We'd eat after we were done for the day and then lay in our sleeping bags and fart and Brad and I would laugh about it, and mutter about what a cheap mother-fucker Murray was—"Rice a fuckin' Ronil Jesus!" but the only time we ever said anything, after about a week of tacos, he called us "soft bellied pussies," "all you'se guys want is fuckin' steak and lobstah, 'you guys are real fuckin' high rollahs' aren't yuh?" And we'd just look down at our plates, too cowed to fight back.

He'd been a rated chess player in New York when he was young. When it was too rough to fish we'd go into Santa Flavia, the wind tearing down off the ridges, making the anchor cable creak under the strain, and he'd hound us out of our bunks and make us play. Brad lost quickly, without interest or remorse, thinking about getting back in his bunk, but I actually tried to put up a fight, for some reason thinking it couldn't be that hard to learn how to play well enough to beat him. I still got beat in ten minutes flat, so he made me read these chess strategy books he pulled out of his bunk, dog-eared paperbacks with game plans like "the Knight's Gambit" and the "Italian Reverse" to give him some competition. Brad pretended he was a moron, said he couldn't read, so he wouldn't have to learn how to play better, so he could sleep. I was too stupid to think up this ploy first and ended up sitting out there in the galley, Murray leering at me over the chess pieces, gathering up the whole board in one glance, then settling on me, examining me like a raven watching from a telephone pole.

"C'mon, play, PLAY!" when I'd dawdle over a move. He always won, and shook his head with disgust at my feeble intellect, and then showed me where I'd messed up, pointed out the section in the book where the solution was revealed. "Read the fuckin' book Tob. Jeez, what am I gonna do with you'se guys?" After awhile I could actually perform enough of these maneu-



vers to keep the game going for a half hour or so, but he still inevitably won, his face alternating between glee at winning, and resigned boredom at having to play with such fools.

He had the boat because he'd been the Decca Radar man in southwest Alaska in the 60s, coming up from California to fix radars on boats out in Adak and Dutch Harbor and Kodiak. He met the original owner of the boat, the guy who'd had it built, and went in as a silent partner on it. The owner and his two sons went out one day with a deckload of pots and rolled over and sank off Chiniak and everybody died. The story was they'd stacked too many pots on and too close to the back of the house so they couldn't close the door when they had to. But who knew really what had happened. The boat rolled and sank and Murray raised it, put a new engine in, hired a crew, and became a crab skipper. He taught himself how to fish. He told us he had ping pong balls blown down through a hose into the hull to bring her up and I still don't know if you can really do that. His dead partner's wife couldn't bear to look at the *Madre* after he brought it back up and got it next to the dock, so she sold him her share and left for Seattle. I used to lay in my bunk and think about those guys floating just off the mattresses down there on the bottom, drowned in their sleep. Somebody in Tony's told us the divers found one of the sons in the galley with a finger still hooked around the ring of a coffee mug. Murray laughed when we asked him if those stories were true. "What? Ya'fraid ah ghosts? You wanna live forevuh? Hah! Quit whinin' and go chop some bait!"

Running back to town he'd tell us stories about fishing out west in the Aleutians in the late '60s, about wild beer parties in the officers club at the Adak Navy base, about him and his crew dropping acid on a run to Seattle once after his first wife quit him, about the whale that breached in front of the boat and freaked them all out in the middle of Seymour Narrows—"I thought it was a fuckin' sea monstah! Ahhh! I thought we was all gonna die!" And then he'd laugh so hard he had to push his glasses back up his nose. "Ah jeez, we sure used to have



fun . . .” He had hit the ‘60s late but made up for it with enthusiasm, and in a way he was born to live then, somehow they’d screwed up having him born in 1925 instead of 1945, grew his hair long, and took to dope smoking like a righteous hippie.

He told us about how he and his first wife and kids lived in Oakland in those early years, across the street from Sonny Barger, the President of the Oakland Chapter of the Hells Angels. When we asked if it was safe living with Sonny Barger for a neighbor, with all those bikers raising hell at night, he said “Hah! Are you kiddin? Nobody messed with that block, not even the cops. We didn’t even have to lock the doors, because it was Sonny’s block, right? And he made sure nobody messed with him and his neighbors.” Eventually he was spending all his time in Alaska and he finally got his wife to move up to Kodiak, which was a town of 4,000 people on a big day back then. She came up in the winter with the two kids and slipped on the ice and broke her leg the day she flew in. Murray had to go to Dutch Harbor the next day and he got her squared away as best he could in the house he’d rented, and then he flew out, just left her there with two kids and the nearest person she knew way down in California. She was cooped up in that house for weeks, hobbling around on crutches, somehow managing with getting the kids to school, getting to the grocery store, whatever. Murray flew in and out a few times between jobs but was mostly gone, that part wasn’t much different than when they lived in California, but then spring started coming, and finally the doctor told her he’d cut the cast off the next Friday. Murray came back from wherever, brought her some roses, took her to the doctor and they cut the cast off. They went home to get ready to go out for dinner at Solly’s but then the house started shaking and five minutes later it was still shaking, and then the water went out of the bay and when it came back in the tsunami took the whole downtown to pieces. They never went out to dinner and Murray’s wife was on the first plane out, a National Guard flight, and she never came back. . . . Sometime after that Murray bought the boat and stayed in Kodiak for good.

He never put a dime back into the boat after he got her working again, no maintenance, just a coat of paint once in awhile. He could fix anything electronic but he kept the radar going with a screwdriver wedged into the case under the scope hood, and if you bumped it on wheelwatch, the screen would go black and you'd have to get Murray up to wedge it back in, just so, while he ranted about fuckin' greenhorns fuckin' with the "adjustments." There were still barnacles up on the flying bridge rails years after they raised her, painted over with white deck enamel, and he'd all heard about the guy who'd been standing under the boom when the cable parted and it came down on him, thirty feet of falling rusty steel. He lived, crippled for life in a wheelchair down in Seattle, washed up on the same beach as half of Kodiak, when they got too old to fish anymore. All of Murray's friends, the superintendent at the cannery, the insurance brokers, were always after him to fix up the boat, but he never did, except for the occasional paint job, and whatever was absolutely necessary to keep the boat fishing. Once early morning Brad and I went out on the bow to winch the anchor up and the Hydraulic fluid had frozen in the degree wind coming off the ridges in the bay. We fooled around for a couple of hours with hydraulic hoses and fittings, our hands red and stinging in the cold, working without gloves to turn the nuts and heat the anchor up, but he never fixed the filter that let the water get in there in the first place. The boat stayed near breakdown.

At some point after I got off the boat the cannery offered to lend him enough money for a serious overhaul, so he took the money and drove the boat down to Seattle to go into the shipyard. But he never went to the yard, instead he just tied the boat up to some dock in Ballard and spent the money as a down payment on a dairy farm in Oregon. After that, he spent his time down there when he wasn't crab fishing. He talked on the radio all the time about his cows and alfalfa, about how much milk the farm produced, but his fences and the tractors were probably as fucked up as the boat.



Christmas 1975 I was living on the *Madre*, my first Christmas away from home. I went out on Christmas Eve to Tony's and the Harvester Inn on Mill Bay Road and ended up shit-faced drunk in the living room of an Aleutian Home trying to talk a girl into sleeping with me, the same girl who'd sat with Dave on the steps of the B&B Bar waiting for it to open. She gave me a blanket and went off to her own bedroom, and I woke up in the grey morning of Christmas with rain pouring down outside, mud splashing on the window from the trucks going by twenty feet away. I was still so drunk I had to sit down to put on my pants, and it took awhile to find my boots under the couch. Murray had made a point of telling me to come up to his house for dinner, and for awhile I thought about not going. But I had nowhere else to go, at least nowhere within walking distance, so I headed out into the rain and walked up through Aleutian Homes to Thorsheim St. right up against the tall grass and alder bushes on the side of Pillar Mountain. I stood on the porch, as wet as a god, mud halfway up my legs and debated even knocking, but in the end there it was, Christmas, and the lights were on inside, there was music, I could smell food blowing out of the stove vent on the side of the house, and I was hungry. Murray made a big deal when he opened the door, turned around to a roomful of people and introduced me to them all, told them I was a good kid and stuck a hot buttered rum in my hand. His wife Wanda worked for the borough and some of the people were friends from her office, middle-aged men in plaid shirts, their wives in stretch pants. Murray's best friend Mitch was all cleaned up out of the embroidered I it. Nobody was as drunk as I still felt, and nobody was smoking dope. It was a side of the Kodiak social milieu I had never seen much of.

The table was loaded down with plates of food, candles, bottles of wine, and somebody pushed me into a chair in the middle of one long side, handed me a plate and silverware and told me to dig in. Murray started giving toasts, waving his wine glass around, and laughing at his own jokes as he commanded

the party. I sat with a plate full of food in front of me, eating my way through it, and had to cut the turkey on it at some point. But the plate was only about three quarters on the table because of all serving dishes and bottles, and when I put too much pressure on the outboard side of the plate it flipped over and dumped the whole load of turkey and potatoes and gravy and cranberry sauce in my lap. Everybody at the table saw it happen but Murray started hollering in a great happy voice about something, and I carefully scooped everything back on the plate and slipped in back onto the table with everybody carefully not watching. After awhile I left, Murray draping his arm over my shoulder, telling me how glad he was I'd come, his wife shaking my hand, telling me to 'come on up any old time.' I walked down the hill in the December dark of early evening and ended up in Tony's with a beer in my hand, my back against the red vinyl cushions along the wall, the green and silver and red tinsel of the Christmas decorations hanging from the bottle racks spinning around whenever somebody came in with the wind behind them. The jukebox was on with some bizarre and frenetic disco song and I sat there, knowing thirty people there, and feeling like I'd never been so alone in my life.

In February I quit the Madre and got a job on a bigger, better, boat. We spent the rest of the winter fishing down on the compass rose off the south end of the island, better fishing than the Horse's Head, but a bigger ocean. The wind came sixty miles off the mainland on a westerly, and from forever on an easterly, and there was nowhere to hide when it came up, it was an eight hour run just to get inside Tanner Head in Alitak. Boats like the Madre could, it wasn't always a sure thing they could get back when the weather came up. Murray tried fishing out there for a while that winter anyway, we'd see him off on the horizon, the black smoke of his untuned engine blowing away across the whitecap and the blue water. And he was always on the radio, talking to his buddy Mitch, trying to get him to tell him where the hot spots were that week.

I heard a story about Murray once, from those years



between wives, out at the Beachcombers bar one night, dancing upstairs to the house band, Moon Minglewood. In those years you could see some strange things at the Beachcombers, shooting sometimes, (an amazingly small sound in a crowded bar, a 38, and the incongruity of smelling gunpowder mixed with beer and marijuana in the same close air), or people sitting in the corner of the dance floor under one of the portholes getting blowjobs, men and women going through all kinds of trips on hallucinogenics and beer and peppermint schnapps, sobbing for boats that had sunk with all their friends, or laughing because they'd made fifty grand in six weeks. Everything happened sometimes, all of it, in a kind of high pressure wrap, a hundred years of experience squeezed into five years, so that it made you think the town itself was aging at an unforgiving rate, was burning up with fever and desire, and was itself living as wild and hard as the individuals themselves, like the guy who sat naked at the bar every night when he wasn't out fishing, lowering a trap he'd built out of matchsticks down onto the floor with a piece of twine, baited with hamburger to catch cockroaches, until he got shot in the head one afternoon with a 44 magnum while he was fucking the shooter's wife in a trailer out in Monashka. (The husband and the wife and the guy who'd driven the husband out there with the gun all walking into the Village Bar afterwards, the woman wrapped in a blanket, smeared flecks of blood still drying on her neck.) So there was Murray, in a crush of fucked up fisherman and hookers and hippie chicks, refugees from every weird scene in the world, dancing naked except for a paper bag over his head with eye-holes cut in it, his glasses blinking in there inside the holes, those big loose white elbows flapping around while the band played a Doobie Brothers song, and a seventeen-year-old Native girl from Old Harbor dancing with him, her long black hair swinging around, slapping him in the chest, the colored lights from the stage reflecting in her hair, flashing red and green, and the back of her pants dark and wet with spilled beer.

I spent my winters out west for a long time after those first

years in Kodiak, and saw him only occasionally. Once I ran into him downtown on an awful December night right after John Lennon died, and we got a ride with a friend of ours out to the Harvester Inn. The three of us drove out there and sat in the gravel parking lot in the front seat of the pickup truck, the rain running in rivulets down the windshield, the bright white lights on the outside of the club coming in through the running water, making strange crawling shadows on our faces while we drank and snorted cocaine out of a paper slip. The radio was on, it was maybe a week before Christmas, and they played that song "And Now That It's Christmas," and John Lennon and Yoko Ono's voices mingled with the drumming of the rain on the steel roof of the truck. We all stopped talking and snorting and sucking on the bottles and just stared at the water running down the windshield for a while without saying anything. When the song ended we sat for a minute and then I mentioned that time I'd gone up to Murray's for Christmas dinner, about how hungover I'd been, about spilling the turkey all over my lap. And Murray sort of laughed quietly and said yeah I remember that. Jesus you were such a greenhorn. Always lyin' in the bunk in the fetal position. Mitch still gives me shit for having guys like you on the boat. What was the mane of that buddy of yours with the fuckin' red hair, almost died on us from alcohol poisoning?

The last time I saw him I found him sitting in the B&B one early spring afternoon drinking an Olympia beer. It had been a few years since I'd talked to him and I'd heard he was dying of cancer. He weighed about 140 pounds, his Carharts were hanging off him and his head was way down inside the collar like a turtle's, his shoulders thin and narrow under the brown cloth, like folded bird wings. His cheeks were hollow, the stubble of his day old beard running across his jaw like last year's corn stubble in a February field. Even his hands had shrunk, they were still big paws, completely surrounding the can, but the flesh was gone, the fingers were just bones with skin stretched over them and the joints were all knotted up. I asked him about



Oregon and he said yeah, it's great down there, Wanda loves it. He told me he was just up in Kodiak to sell the house up on Thorsheim St. We sat for awhile watching a basketball game, not saying much. The sunlight came in the big front windows and warmed the backs of my legs where I had them hiked up on the bottom rung of the barstool. Out boots dripped melting street slush on the floor under our stools. I finished my beer and stood up to go. The boat I was working on was unloading down the street and I had to get back to pump out a tank. He leaned over away from me with his elbows on the bar and looked up out of those ridiculous black framed glasses, through the bottoms of the lenses. "See ya Tob." We both knew we'd never see each other again. I shook his hand. His eyes were still really green, still really clear.

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He used to tell us stories about being a seventeen-year-old merchant marine radio operator, running across the North Atlantic to Murmansk in the winter of 1942, watching ships a mile away being torpedoed, watching with binoculars as men tried to swim in freezing water through burning gasoline. They were forbidden to slow down, to try and pick anybody up because of the U-Boats. On some of those trips that winter they lost fifty ships in one crossing, out of two hundred, fireballs at night, pillars of smoke rising in the blue winter sky behind them in daylight all the way to the North Cape of Norway. He told me once that little girl from Old Harbor still loved him, just loved his New York ass.







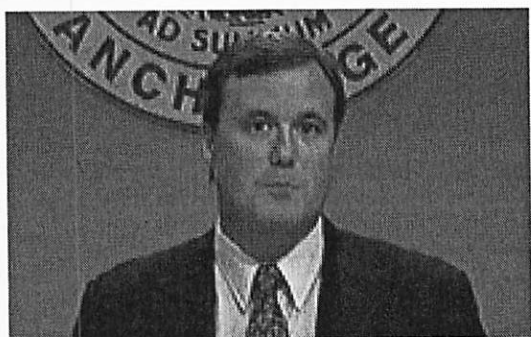
The Tax Cap Debate was a one-hour live television debate concerning Proposition Four. The Program, hosted by UAA alumnus Jeff Turner, featured tax cap advocates Jim Crawford and Uwe Kalenka and tax cap opponents Jack Frost and USUAA President Skye Rubadeau. Journalism and Public Communications students under the direction of professors Mel Kalkowski and Fred Pearce, Ph.D produced the show. The show aired live on cable Channel 42 and was re-aired several times. The debate was part of the College of Arts and Sciences UAA Expo Homecoming in October 2000.



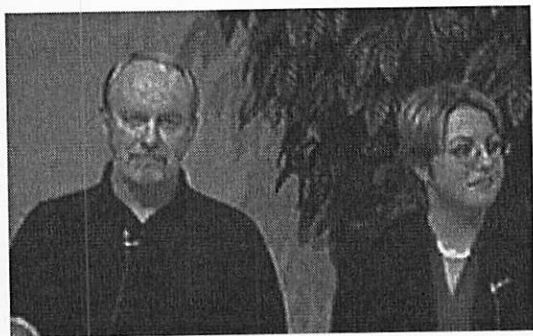
Tax Cap Debate Participants

Crystal Sherrer & Heather Ihris

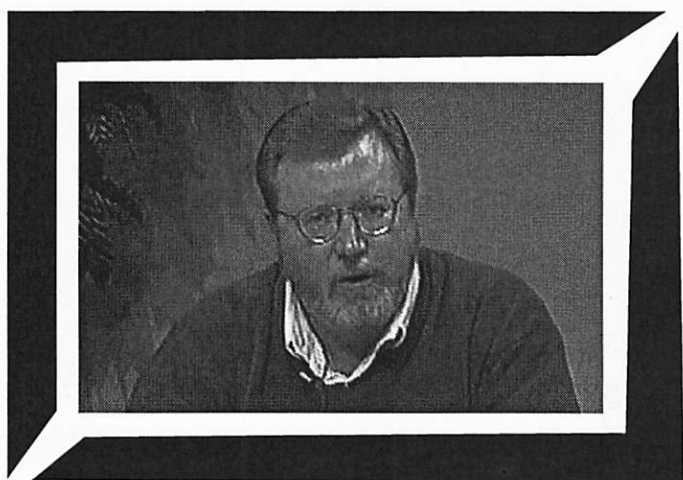
Tax Cap Debate Television Program



Jeff Turner—Moderator



Jack Frost & Skye Rubadeau—Tax Cap “NO”



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Jim Crawford—Tax Cap “YES”

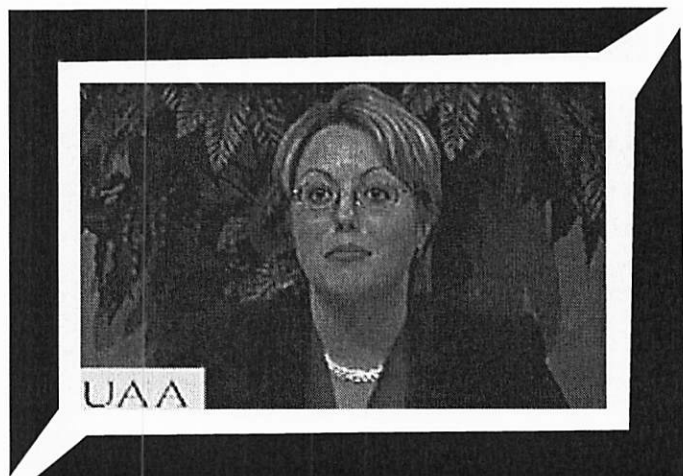


Uwe Kalenka—Tax Cap “YES”

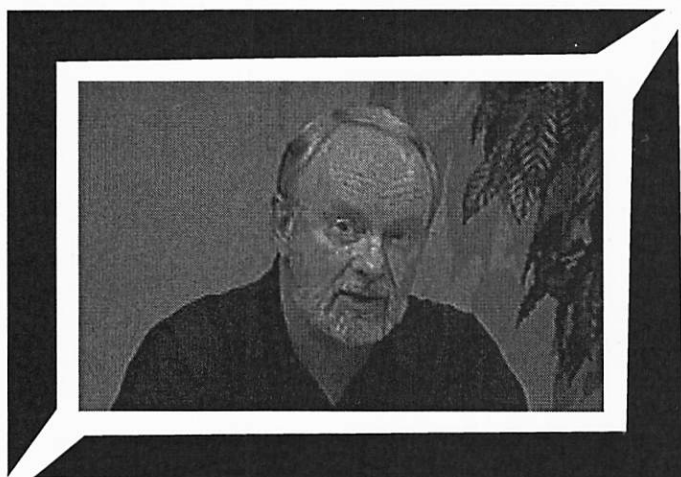
Tax Cap Debate



Uwe Kalenka & Jim Crawford—Tax Cap “YES”

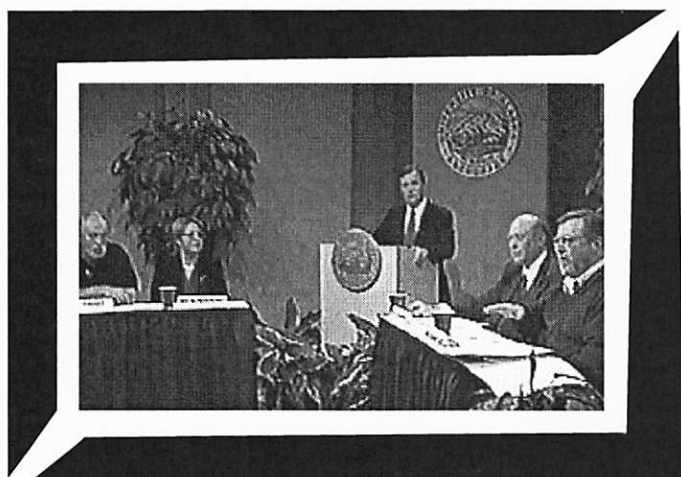


Skye Rubadeau—Tax Cap “NO”



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Jack Frost—Tax Cap “NO”



Tax Cap Debate Participants

Tax Cap Debate





Alaska's natives are currently at war during peaceful times! There are numerous casualties against an enemy that for the most part goes unseen and until recently was unheard of. The battlefield lies directly under Alaska Natives' feet, in the food that they eat, and for some within their very biological makeup, passed on to them from their parents. This war is destroying a culture, attacking and affecting others but most violently affecting the Alaskan Natives. The war they fight is against contaminants on their Native lands. This paper will briefly cover some of the aspects of this disastrous battle.

The contaminants that will be covered in this paper are referred to as Persistent Organic Pollutants or more commonly known as (POPs). Persistent Organic Pollutants are a result of the progression, adaptation, and irresponsibility of humans. POPs are man-made chemicals that can remain in the environment unchanging or changing very little for years. The main focus of the contaminants discussed in this paper will come from three main types of POPs. (1) Organochlorines or also referred to as (OCs). This subheading of POPs consists of primarily man-made chemicals that can be found in pesticides; electrical transformers, the chemicals used in the production of plastics, or may be formed as the result of garbage being burned. These organochlorines are mainly considered to be what are called PCBs or the scientific name of polychlorinated biphenyls. (2) Other pollutants that may be covered in this report are heavy metals and radionuclides.

Heavy metals are elements that are found in nature but may be released into the environment due to mining, smelting, and the creation of reservoirs. Most of these heavy metals can be found in your average everyday vitamin, but when taken in excess their presence in the body can have a detrimental effect.

Dwane Anderson

*Destruction of a Culture by Means of Contaminants*



(3) The last sections of contaminant that will be covered are the radionuclides, which are present in the environment naturally. When found in excess though they release radiation, which is harmful. They may be found in excess due to, now banned, above ground testing of nuclear weapons, nuclear waste sites, and nuclear accidents such as the Chernobyl power plant core meltdown in 1986.

Table 1  
Radioactive elements consistent with contaminants

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<u>Natural</u>	<u>Man-made</u>
Lead—210	Cesium—137 & Cesium—134
Polonium—210	Iodine—137
Radium—226	Strontium—90
Radon—222	Cobolt—60
	Potassium—40
	Thorium—232
	Uranium—235

Note. From “Highlights of the Canadian Arctic Contaminants Assessment Report,” by S.L. Han and K. Adare.

These dangerous health hazards arrive into the environment in numerous ways; organochlorines like PCBs are used as insecticides even though their use was banned in 1977. Use of PCBs has been prohibited in the United States but can be allowed only in emergency public heath situations. Even though these dangerous chemicals are not used in the United States their production and manufacture has not been outlawed or banned.

Underdeveloped poorer countries are the purchasers of these cheap but toxic pollutants. They must either choose to use the cheaply made organochlorines to defend their people and food sources from insects that carry diseases and at the same time watch as their communities are ravaged by long-term

illnesses, cancers, and deformities. Or they must choose not to use the organochlorines and witness their people's deterioration due to death and illness caused by insects carrying diseases or worse, watch them starve because insects have eaten their crops. Alternatives to the organochlorines exist, but for poorer countries they are either too expensive or are not available.

Most of the heavy metal pollution is due to three main elements, which are:

1. Mercury—coal burning, paper industry, and chemical plants.
2. Cadmium—zinc mining, smelting, tossed out batteries, and numerous industrial processes.
3. Lead—mining, smelting, industrial procedures and processes, and the use of leaded gasoline (Han & Adare, 37).

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Radionuclides have been released into the environment because of the Chernobyl accident in 1986. Russian deep-sea nuclear waste dumping is still seeping out, although the materials are sealed in steel drums. The sinking of nuclear subs in the Russian Arctic ocean can cause pollutants to roam free. There are also the nuclear processing plants in Europe that have been known for their oceanic dumping of man-made radionuclides.

Despite the fact that most of the pollution is limited to other poorer or underdeveloped countries, Alaska doesn't exist in an enclosed ecosystem. The whole world shares the air, water, and landmasses. Transportation systems of pollution can be air currents or the wind, oceans or oceanic currents, ice, and rivers. The main and most detrimental to Alaskan Natives is the remaining military equipment left in their immediate or surrounding living areas. Known as Formerly Used Defense Sites or as FUDS, these areas normally had air force communication towers. These communication towers were cooled by polychlorinated biphenyls. Other types of contaminants that are left on these sites are electric transformers and capacitors, both of which contain polychlorinated biphenyls. Now that the equipment is no longer in use and has not been removed by the military, it is a threat and danger to the Native community. As these

old communication towers wear down they release organochlorines into the environment polluting groundwater, and entering into the food chain.

Adding to the already prevalent pollutants are the pollutants carried by the winds. The arctic winds carry pollutants from the major industrial areas of the world into Alaska. Slower transportation systems are the ice flows and oceans, which can take years to reach a given area to pollute but immediately begin polluting the oceanic food chain. Direct dumping of wastes into the ocean and pollution deposited on the ocean and ice add to the global problems of pollution. Contaminants can either be transported or stored by the ocean. Contaminants usually travel in the top fifty meters of the waters surface or attach to small particles that then sink to the ocean floor and eventually end up on oceanic underwater shelves that may act as a storage area for contaminants.

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The Atlantic and Pacific oceans empty into the Arctic Ocean and are transported by two major oceanic currents: the Transpolar Drift and the Beaufort Gyre. Both currents interact with one another thereby making contaminate travel easier. The Beaufort Gyre most directly affects Alaska by making a circular motion around the northern most tip of Alaska. Ice is important in contaminant transportation and pollution because animals will feed on or near the ice. During the winter contaminants condense in the air and fall onto the ice; ice wears down rocks, soil, and sediment producing more natural heavy metal and Radionuclides in the environment. These can be taken up by animals and plants and enter the food chain. Glaciers are the record keepers of pollution in the arctic. Ice cores show that before the 1960s there were no contaminants being deposited in Alaska. This time period is considered the pre-industrial period because use of PCBs was not widely used or popular until the 1950s - 1970s. During this time period, "it was estimated that over four hundred thousand metric tons (mt) or nine hundred million pounds of PCBs were sold domestically in the U. S. . . . The cumulative sales of PCBs in North America from



1930 through 1970 amounted to four hundred and fifty thousand metric tons (mt) or one billion pounds" (Ackerman, et al., 1983, p. 4).

The estimated losses to the environment from 1930 through 1970 has been estimated at three hundred and fifty four thousand metric tons (mt) or seven hundred and seventy million pounds.

Table 2

Estimated losses to the environment from 1930-1970

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Air	27,000 metric tons
Fresh and Coastal water	54,000 metric tons
Dumps and Landfills	270,000 metric tons

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So the ice cores from the 1950s up until the 1970s show high levels of PCBs. This time period after the 1900s is called the post-industrial. Contaminants would have thought to decline after the 1970s but the ice shows the same levels or slightly increased levels. This is due to the "grasshopper effect" and other modes of contaminant transportation.

The "grasshopper effect" is a mode of contaminant transportation in which pollutants are evaporated in a warmer climate, move by the winds to a colder region, and then condense and fall to the earth. This cycle can continue over and over until it reaches the arctic, where the temperatures are cold enough that the contaminants don't have a chance to evaporate. Since the major air currents of the earth tend to move to the arctic sooner or later, Alaska will get more than its share of the worlds pollution.

The "grasshopper effect" can only be taken advantage of by organochlorines and not by heavy metals or radionuclides. They are what are called a one-hop pollutant, they can be released into the atmosphere and condense as they enter a colder region usually not far from their source of production. This

means that heavy metals and radionuclides don't travel as far or as fast as organochlorines, which makes the arctic a little safer for its inhabitants.

The smallest pathway of contaminants is by rivers that feed into the interior of Alaska or out the sea. Though rivers are the smallest pathways, they do reach areas that are harder to reach by other means of transportation. Contaminants that are transported by air can fall on the snow and in the spring travel with the melted snow into lakes that feed the rivers. The rivers can feed plants or flow out to sea affecting the sea lice population. Either of these are the first step in the start of contaminants entering the food chain. Once the contaminants have entered the food chain, the process cannot be reversed. Organochlorines are fat soluble or are attracted to fat molecules, this means that once the organochlorines enter an animal's body they are almost impossible to breakdown and remove from the organism's body. The organochlorines are stored in the animal's fat cells for the rest of its life and will build up slowly over time with more intake of the contaminant. Because of the persistent nature and fat attractant properties of the organochlorines, they can bioaccumulate; they can build up over time increasing in numbers in the fat cells of animals as the animal continues to eat foods that are contaminated. Younger animals have less organochlorines because they have been feeding on them for a shorter time span than the adult animals.

Levels of organochlorines in the environment can be rather small and still cause harm due to biomagnification. Bioaccumulation occurs over a lifetime of usually eating the same foods and increasing bodily contaminants.

Biomagnification occurs when you move to a food chain that is much larger. Higher levels of contaminants can be found in animals that use other animals as food sources. Generally with each step from predator to prey there is a leap in the number of contaminants that are absorbed. So if you only consume animals from the top of the food chain you will absorb more



contaminants than if you eat animals from the bottom of the food chain.

Plants and microscopic marine organisms tend to be the starting grounds for contaminants. Plants get their contaminants from the air, soil, and water. It has been found that plants like the lichens of the arctic tend to get most of their contaminants from the air. They are then eaten along with other regular food sources by caribou and birds. Microscopic plant life (such as the case with algae) takes in the contaminants as well. Algae absorb their contaminants mainly from the water; they pass on their contaminants to microscopic organisms, which in turn are eaten by larger organisms.

There are factors that can vary the amount of contaminants in an organism like migration, age, and reproduction. Many of Alaska's animals migrate out of the state and can migrate into areas of high contamination, feeding there for a while, and then moving on. Migratory birds have one hundred times more contaminants than birds that do not migrate. The older the organism the more contaminants it has accumulated so age does play a factor in contamination. Before animals reach maturity both male and female animals have about the same number of contaminants in their bodies. Once a female begins reproducing her contaminant levels drop due to the fact that she can pass on a number of her contaminants to her young through birth and nursing. Once a female begins nursing her young, her number of contaminants drop below that of the average male of the same species. This has been found to be true in animals as well as humans. Again it is necessary to remember that Alaska is not its own biosphere and numerous factors affect the state and its inhabitants.

Different parts of the body store different types of contaminants; different types of animals have higher elevated levels of contaminants. Marine mammals have a higher fat content than land mammals. Organochlorines are attracted to fat molecules because the blubber organochlorine levels in marine mammals are ten times higher. The most common organochlo-

rines found in fat tissues are the PCBs: toxaphene, DDT, and chlordane. Heavy metals are found to accumulate in organs, bones, muscles, and tissues. The bones tend to absorb lead, kidneys and livers take in mercury and cadmium, and mercury and methylmercury is evenly absorbed throughout the body. High levels of cadmium have been found in the caribou, moose, and musk ox population due to the contamination of lichens through airborne pollution. The caribou, moose, and musk ox eat lichens, and the contamination is absorbed directly into their systems. Muktuk, liver, kidney, and muscle of the beluga whale, seals, and the narwhal whale have been found to contain mercury. Mercury was also found in walrus tissue, but was not found in walrus mukluk. A more dangerous form of mercury known as methylmercury, has been found in the tissues of beluga whale, seal and narwhal whale, it has also been found in the muscles tissue of freshwater fish. Lead has only been found prevalent when hunters have been using lead shot. To avoid this type of contamination alternate ammunition should be used or the hunters need to make sure that the meat is cleaned of the lead shot thoroughly before processing. Radionuclides are usually stored in the bones and muscles but are at the moment not as noticeable a problem as organochlorines and heavy metals, due to the ban on above ground nuclear tests and safer restrictions on the use and disposal of nuclear wastes. There are the nuclear waste barrels that have been disposed of at sea and the sunken nuclear subs that are a concern. The problem is that they leak their contaminants slowly into the sea and the sea contaminant transport system takes many years to reach their destination or the contaminants may have attached to small particles and become part of underwater shelves.

Because certain types of heavy metals are naturally occurring in nature some animals have adapted capabilities to deal with higher levels of the heavy metals in their bodies. For example the beluga whales have been studied for this type of heavy metal removal system. The beluga whale has been found to be able to use selenium, another type of heavy metal, to



assist in the conversion of mercury to a more easily broken down non-detrimental form. Even though some of these types of natural defense systems exist in some animals, they're still only able to perform these functions on a very limited basis. The beluga whale have been tested for contaminants and 8% of the beluga whale population contain contaminants that are at a level of 1000 parts per million within their system.

Some animals are more highly sensitive to contaminants than others. These types of animals are watched closely by the scientific community, and are considered the early warning systems for high levels of contaminants. The mink is one of these animals that is more susceptible to increased levels of contaminants. It has been shown that once contaminants are increased within its environment the females gave birth to more stillborn pups and more early death of young pups resulted. This type of biological watch is done for other animals as well, toads are an excellent identifier of airborne contaminants because some toads have the ability to breath through their skin and their skin has been found to be semi-permeable. They also tend to mutate due to contaminants more rapidly than other organisms. One other animal that is under constant watch in the south is the Peregrine falcon that has shown decreased eggshell thickness and shells that would break before the newborn chicks were ready to hatch.

Elders have been questioned on the wildlife of Alaska and they too have noticed changes. Such as deformities, population size, and even changes in fish and caribou livers have been observed. It's very hard to make a determination whether these differences in the wildlife are related to contaminants or just natural anomalies without scientific testing. During a battery clean up at Eklutna river one of the residents stated that the fish population used to be so large that when salmon came up the river to spawn, there were so many of them and they swam up the river with such force that they used to make their own wave. This would carry the fish further up the river, now because of the contaminants the fish population has plummet-



ed and the waves of fish are no longer seen.

The contaminants over time can and have caused, “reproductive failure, decreased number of young being born, unhatched eggs, early death of young, nesting behavior abnormalities, deformities—such as crossed bills in birds and abnormal jaw structure of seals, cancerous and non-cancerous tumors, and a decreased resistance to disease” (Han & Adare, p. 18). Unfortunately this contamination is affecting some of the indigenous people of Alaska, especially those that live near areas that have Formerly Used Defense Sites. The organochlorines that are being released into their environment due to the communication towers, electric transformers, and capacitors breakdown have been affecting the wildlife and people that live there. The people are and have been affected due to personal contact with the pollutants, and the traditional foods that they eat.

All people have a small amount of Persistent Organic Pollutant in their system when they are born, and were originally passed to them by their mother. Over time like animals the Persistent Organic pollutants bioaccumulate, build up in our bodies over our lifetime, and biomagnify, because we are a predatory species and feed on other animals, we can absorb the contaminants of the animals we eat and they ate.

The store bought foods that we consume to a degree have Persistent Organic Pollutants in them, but these contaminants are regulated by the Food and Drugs Act and Regulations or (FDA). The traditional foods of Alaskan natives have been found to provide, “inexpensive and readily available nutrients, essential fatty acids, antioxidants, calories and protein and many health benefits such as protection from diabetes, cardiovascular disease, improved maternal nutrition, and neonatal and infant brain development (Perdue, et al., Feb.19, 1998, p. 1).

The traditional foods of Alaskan natives have also provided other benefits to its people besides a healthy diet. It also is of, “great importance to the self-definition, self-determination, cultural and socio-economic, and overall health and well-being



of indigenous people (Perdue, et al., Feb.19, 1998, p. 1)." As well as, "keeps people in tune with nature, promotes sharing in the community, is essential to community culture, teaches children skills in survival, food preparation, provides opportunities for learning patience and other desirable personality attributes, and brings respect from others and builds pride and confidence after a successful harvest (Han & Adare, p. 7)." It is essential to the indigenous peoples of Alaska to continue in their traditional diet and lifestyle.

The types of food that are prevalent in the diet of Alaskan natives are caribou, bear, fish, moose, hare, and rabbit which is generally consistent with most of the indigenous people throughout the year. Ptarmigan, ducks, geese, and bird eggs are eaten when they are in season or not migrating. Coastal regions usually eat seal, beluga whale, narwhal whale, walrus, shellfish and clams. Plants and berries are also a large part of the native traditional diet. All native groups due to spiritual, religious, tribal beliefs, or region of inhabitant do not always consume all of the foods listed. The animals that are used are generally used completely and usually nothing goes to waste. Meat, organs, intestines, bones, and blood all have a use within the native diet or culture. Traditional food when it is not contaminated is considered very healthy. Omega-3, a fatty acid can be found in many marine mammals and fish, this fatty acid is believed to help prevent heart disease, but can't be found in preprocessed store bought foods. Vitamin A can be found in caribou, seal liver, marine mammal blubber, and fresh willow leaves. Vitamin C is prevalent in fresh berries, fish eggs, and shellfish. Calcium can be obtained through eating soups and stews that have been cooked with the bones in them. Just like store bought food all traditional foods have Persistent Organic Pollutants in them although depending on the region, there may be higher levels or lower levels of contaminants.

When you compare the traditional healthy diet with that of a diet only consisting of store bought food, the traditional diet will be healthier, providing more nutrients, essential vitamins,

and minerals for the body. Store purchased meats and poultry tend to be 12% to 20% higher in fats than traditionally hunted meats. Moose and caribou meat have been shown to have higher levels of zinc and iron than store bought meats. Economically it is financially cheaper to hunt, fish, and pick the traditional foods of Alaska than it is to purchase store bought foods.

86 Certain communities have had to switch to store bought food because of the amount of contaminants in their food web or ecosystem. There are negative aspects that are associated with this switch, "increases in body weight; anemia (a blood condition); heart disease and diabetes; poor dental health; a lowered resistance to infection; and decreased physical activity (Han & Adare, p. 10)." Many indigenous people don't have the access to store bought food and continue to live off of traditional foods.

Problems associated with the intake of traditional foods that contain increased levels of contaminants may be skin lesions, blindness, hearing loss, jaundice, abdominal pain, chloracne, skin rash, swelling of the joints, symptoms of lethargy, joint pain, reproductive failures, gastric disorders, cancerous and non-cancerous tumors. Increased lead has been shown to possible lower children's IQ, cause Attention Deficit disorder, lowered levels of resistance to immunity, increase in ear infections in children, increase in respiratory viruses, and a possible link to asthma. Another problem associated with increased contaminants in the human body is that some of the contaminants are mimickers and may mimic normal hormones thereby reducing the age of puberty, depending on levels of the contaminant and type.

With all of the identified symptoms the native community is outraged and concerned for themselves and their children. Avoidance of the traditional native diet is not an alternative for some people. There are foods and some parts of foods that are lower in concentrations of contaminants than others. Animals that thrive on a very short food chain or younger animals have



a reduced number of contaminants. Meat has a lower level of contaminants in it than the fat or organs do. This is all dependent upon the area within which the animal lives and feeds.

Cooking methods may also reduce the number of contaminants in the traditional native diet. Boiling and frying are excellent cooking techniques that may reduce contaminants, if the fat that is produced is drained off and not used. Drying and smoking does not reduce the fat content and therefore does not reduce the amount of contaminants. Aged dip or fermented oil of muktuk has a higher than normal fat content and has more contaminants than fresh or boiled muktuk. Blubber on the other hand had similar or a reduced number of contaminants in the aged dip, than the fresh samples.

Once the contaminants are in the body there is nothing that can be done to rid the body of them. The body can get rid of some contaminants on its own but it is a long, slow process that takes years and may be replaced by the intake of more contaminants faster than the body can rid itself of them. It was theorized that when someone loses weight they might in effect lose some of the contaminants. The reality is that the fat is only being converted into usable energy and not eliminated from the body, so any contaminants that were in the fat tissue is transferred to the remaining fat tissue.

A health risk assessment can be preformed to compare how much of a contaminant is in a food to what the Food and Drug Administration has deemed safe or non-harmful. The type of information required to do a health risk assessment is as follows: "How much contaminant is in a food, how much of that food do people eat, how much contaminant from all sources can people be exposed to without effects, how much contaminant do they get through their food, and any other sources" (Han & Adare, p. 30). The results from a health risk assessment may take anywhere from a few months to a few years.

The calculation takes into account (NOEL) or (NOAEL), which is no observable effect level or no observable adverse

effect level. This number is the amount of contaminants the animal could take in daily without having an effect to them and the number is in the form of, “the amount of contaminants per kilogram of body weight per day” (Han & Adare, p. 71). The number is calculated with laboratory animals since human testing is banned and inconceivable. The results of these tests are then converted by weight calculation to humans. Because the number is then recalculated into terms that would apply to humans, a safety factor must be applied to the calculation. Which means that a human may be more sensitive to a contaminant than a rat so the NOEL is divided by 100 in order to give a safety factor of ten-fold. Once these two numbers are found and divided you come up with a number referred to as the Tolerable Daily Intake or (TDI). The calculation is found by  $\text{NOEL/Safety Factor (100)} = \text{Tolerable Daily Intake}$ . This is the amount of a contaminant a person could get from any given source every day for the rest of their lives. The amount of contaminants that a person could get from every source in their environment per day is called the Probable Daily Intake. These numbers could then be calculated to give you a number that is called the RMWI or Recommended Maximum Weekly Intake; this is the amount of contaminants that a person could receive per week and not have any adverse effects too.

Table 3

Canada's Food and Drug Administration Standards for Safe Intake of Contaminants

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	<u>Guidelines for Mercury</u>	
	<u>Whole blood ug/L</u>	<u>Hair mg/kg</u>
Normal range	less than 20 ug/L	less than 6 mg/kg
Increasing risk	20 - 100 ug/L	6 - 30 mg/kg
At risk	more than 100 ug/L	more than 30 mg/kg

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Guidelines for lead

Whole blood ug/dL

Normal range	less than 10 ug/dL
At Risk	10 or more ug/dL

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Guidelines for cadmium

Whole blood ug/dL

Normal range	less than 5 ug/dL
At Risk	5 or more ug/dL

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Guidelines for PCBs

	<u>Women of Repro-ductive age</u>	<u>Men/Post- menopausal Women</u>
Tolerable	Less than 5 PPM	Less than 20 PPM
Concern	5 to less than 100 PPM	20 to less than 100 PPM
Action	100 or more PPM	100 or more PPM

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Note. PPM = Parts per million. Adapted from House of Representatives Hearing Subcommittee, 1981, p. 4 and "Highlights of the Canadian Arctic Contaminant Assessment Report" by S. L. Han and K. Adare, p. 27.

The only way in which to decrease the number of contaminants in Alaska is to convince the military to cleanup their FUDS, Formerly Used Defense Sites. This will eliminate the majority of the harmful Persistent Organic Pollutants on Native lands, but will not eliminate the contaminants already in the environment. Further restrictions in the production, sale

and use of organochlorines to poorer countries will slow the amount of organochlorines that are already using the 'grasshopper effect' to travel to Alaska. Increased awareness and alternative preventive methods for insect control in neighboring countries will help with the decreased production of organochlorines. Heavy metal contaminants may and in some areas have been reduced by using two incendiary devices on the smoke stacks thereby burning up the contaminants before they reach the outside of the factory. Unfortunately these systems are costly and at times require political action, or increased costs to the consumer to equate any beneficial action. Radionuclides are currently at a low level risk, but by increasing already tough standards and by enforcing other countries to abide by the same standards we only help ourselves.

Even though these actions may be taken advantage of for the betterment of all people and the earth, the earth will not see the results of our actions until years down the road. Cycles of animals that contain contaminants must die off and slowly the cycle of contamination will reverse itself. The oceans will take the longest to clean themselves of contaminants, due to the vastness of its size and the oceanic shelves that work as storage areas for contaminants.

Canada is currently leading the way asking the world as a whole for tighter controls on the production, and release of Persistent Organic Pollutants. Canada is paving the way and setting the standards on which other countries are basing their own clean up policies and actions against Persistent Organic Pollutants, including the U. S. The Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS) consists of the eight Arctic countries: USA, Canada, Denmark (Greenland), Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. Together they have an agreement to act on and investigate northern environmental issues. This agreement has a subsection known as the AEPS or Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program whose sole purpose is the monitoring and action on Arctic contaminants.

Here in Alaska there are several organizations that desper-



ately need help, a few of which are, The Alaska Native Science Commission, The Artic Council, and The Alaska Community Action on Toxins. It is everyone in the world's responsibility to do what they can to help out in the prevention of and reduction of Persistent Organic Pollutants. It is not a small job and it will take all of us in all nations and countries to clean up what has become a threat to the culture and lives of our native communities.

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Frederic Chopin (1810-1849) was born in a small town near Warsaw, Poland. His father, a teacher, was French and his mother was Polish. Frederic grew up in a cultured, educated family. When he was six years old, he began studying piano and at age eight he played a concerto in public.

Frederic developed a passionate love for Poland, even though he lived most of his life in Paris, France. When he left Poland, he took with him a goblet filled with soil of his beloved native land.

Chopin was a romantic composer, pianist, and teacher. He preferred to perform for small gatherings of friends and in people's private homes. In 1839, Robert Schumann wrote a glowing review of some of Chopin's piano works saying, "Hats off, gentlemen! A new genius!"

Chopin met a woman, a French writer George Sand, and fell in love with her. She did much to inspire him. It was at this time that Chopin composed one of his most famous compositions—"Raindrop" Prelude, Op. 28 NO. 15. This composition was written on a particular dream that he was having while it was raining. It translated his imagination and his chant into tears falling on his heart from the sky. Prelude Op. 28. NO. 16 B flat minor is contrasting to the NO. 15. "The tempo is incredibly fast, fierce and the spread of left-hand extended chords created an impression of unsurpassed passion and wildness," said pianist Simon Barer.

I absolutely worship Chopin; he has written some of the most beautiful piano music there is. The reason I chose these

pieces is because I fell in love with the music when I heard them. I learned “Raindrop” when I was a kid, so it was nice to come back to something familiar. However, the B flat minor NO 16 inspired me and that is why I was determined to learn it. This piece was just what I was looking for; it is exciting and passionate like fire.





Literature is often about fictional events and people. Even when there are events in a work that have actually occurred, the story is not real. Stories are interpretations of a reality. A story can only attempt to represent reality; even historic accounts are tainted with the perception of the observer. However, in post-modern literature one may encounter a work that appears to call attention to the fact that the work is a piece of fiction. In addition, not only is the work fiction, but it is also a representation of reality. Works that exhibit these characteristics are referred to as metafiction. Metafiction, according to Patricia Waugh, is “fictional writing that self consciously and systematically calls attention to its status as an artifact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality” (40). Furthermore, Waugh writes “In providing a critique of their own methods of construction, such writings not only examine the fundamental structures of narrative fiction, they also explore the possible fictionality of the world outside the fictional text” (40). Taking into consideration the preceding definitions of metafiction, the novel, Green Grass, Running Water, by Thomas King, contains many metafictional elements. The novel challenges the reader to continually question the reality of the characters in the story, furthermore, challenging the reader to examine the reality of their own world. In the following discussion, the use of metafiction in the novel Green Grass, Running Water will be analyzed. Moreover, the discussion will also examine the way metafiction is used to draw the reader out of the fictional realm of the story.

Green Grass, Running Water is complex novel. There are many stories being told, although a single narrator is very difficult to identify. Eventually the stories come together, but while reading the novel, it is difficult to separate all of the events that

are taking place. The novel is divided into four parts with each part beginning with the retelling of a traditional Christian story. In part one, the story retold is about Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden; in part two, the story retold is about Noah and the Flood; in part three, the story retold is about the birth of Jesus; and part four, the story is about Jesus as a man. The stories are retold by four old Indians—each story told by a different Indian. The stories reflect very different perspectives other than a traditional Christian point of view. The Indians telling the stories change the names of the characters. For example, Adam and Eve are changed to Ahdamn and First Woman. Mary is called Thought Woman and Jesus is called Young Man Walking On Water. The sectioning of the novel as well as the many different intertwining stories is an example of explicit metafiction. This type of metafiction is very direct and disrupts the linearity of the story, which in turn draws the reader of the fictional world.

For a majority of readers, the traditional Christian stories are very familiar. Changing the names and even making subtle changes to the stories affect the reality of the reader. These changes alter the accepted representation of the stories and for some people the change is very discomforting. The stories from the Bible are interpretations of stories that were based on events in the past. The authors of the Biblical stories told the stories based on the cultural, social, and political views of the time. Similarly, Thomas King has retold the same stories in his novel but his interpretations also reflect his cultural, social, and political views. In her essay, Patricia Waugh says, “it is impossible to describe an objective world because the observer always changes the observed” (41). Every story that is ever told or read is likely to affect people very differently. In our world, every individual will view events differently, and therefore, every story told will be different. Consequently, metafiction addresses the issue of what story or perspective is the real, true story and postmodern critics argue that there is no real or true story. All literature is representative of reality, and therefore, the sto-



ries are constantly changing based on the storyteller. King shows how stories can change based on the storyteller. By using the traditional Christian stories and using four different storytellers, he shows the many ways reality can be interpreted as well as represented.

Another metafictional element that is used in the novel Green Grass, Running Water is the significance of the names in the story. Several of the characters are named after characters in stories by Herman Melville. Nevertheless, just using Melville characters in the book is not what is metafictional; the characters in King's novel are portrayed in the same way as the characters are portrayed in the Melville stories. For example, in the novel Green Grass, Running Water, there is a woman named Babo who claims to be the great great granddaughter of the Babo who was on the ship in Melville's "Benito Cereno" story (98). Babo is an important character because, although she appears to fill the role of a subordinate, she in fact has a great deal of power, just as the Babo on the ship in Melville's story. Readers know that there is no way that a person could be related to someone in another fictional work. The novel clearly challenges the norms of fictional writing and the reality of the reader, while also introducing a very important character to the story.

There are other important names that are significant, such as the name of the doctor who ran the hospital in which Babo worked and also where the four old Indians escaped. The doctor's name is Joseph Hovaugh, and at one point, he is referred to as "Dr. Joseph God Almighty Hovaugh" (King 245). This name is referring to the doctor as Jehovah, or God. The doctor is the head of the hospital and his job is to keep everything in order and to restore that order when it is disrupted. For that reason, when the Indians escape, it is Dr. Joe Hovaugh's job to find them before anything that would disrupt order happens. As the story progresses the doctor seems to find it harder and harder to preserve the order of things. This seems to parallel the world today in that things have gotten so chaotic that even

God Almighty himself can be overwhelmed by the disaster man has created.

King not only uses names from other fictional stories for the names of characters in his novel, several of the names are of actual people in history. For example, there is some controversy surrounding a dam that was built on Indian land in the novel. One of the characters has a cabin that is downstream from the dam and he chooses to fight to keep his house. Consequently, there is a long legal battle and each day a man named Clifford Sifton (118) comes to Eli's cabin to ask him if he will surrender his Native rights to the land. This is a significant twist on the name because Clifford Sifton played an essential role in the removal of lands from the Native people of Canada. The real Sifton never asked the Natives to surrender their rights; he just took their land from them. King has reversed the role of Sifton by making him have to come every-day to ask a Native man to give up his rights. The power has been shifted from the white politician and back into the hands of the Natives as it should have been all along.

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Lastly King does one more play with names that is very interesting; he often changes just one letter in a name that brings about a whole new meaning. A case in point, the name of Ahab's ship in Melville's *Moby Dick* is the Pequod. In Melville's story the Pequod is destroyed by the "great white whale." In the novel Green Grass, Running Water, King changes the "d" to a "t" making the name Pequot, the name of an Indian tribe. The passage containing the letter change is as follows:

"She means Moby-Dick," says Coyote. "I read the book. It's Moby-Dick, the great white whale who destroys the Pequod."

"You haven't been reading your history," I tell Coyote.

"It's English colonists who destroy the Pequots." (220)

By changing the name, King makes a statement about the horrible treatment of Natives by colonists. Although this mistreatment has continued throughout history, King is able to make



the issue comical without losing the significance of the statement.

Metafiction is not always explicitly present in novels. King uses both explicit and implicit metafiction. The retelling of the stories in the novel and the many references to how to tell a story is representative of explicit metafiction. Many times the stories in King's novel are started and then a character will start over again because it is not right, or the character will complain about not having the right words to tell the story. For example, when Babo tries to tell one of the police officers the story that the old Indians told her, she has a hard time finding the words to start the story. Even the old Indians struggled and debated on how to start the stories that they were telling. This is an interesting parallel to the amount of work it requires to write or tell a good story. Words have to be chosen carefully and a great deal of thought and time goes into creating a great work. A writer or a storyteller can not be careless with his or her words or his or her meaning may be lost.

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One example of the implicit metafictional elements in this novel is the double narrative. The novel actually has two levels to the story. On the surface there is the story containing the four old Indians and Coyote who are trying to fix the lives of the people who are from Blossom. These people have all kinds of side stories and conflicts that are addressed in the story and eventually most of the issues are resolved. However, on a deeper level, the novel has various political messages. There are really two different stories being told in the framework of a single novel. In the deeper narrative of the novel, the issue is of the persecution of the Native Americans by the imperialist, English, Christian colonists. The white people came to the Americas and imposed their beliefs onto a group of people who had been living on the land for centuries. Consequently, because the Native American people had different beliefs and a different way of living—the white people decided that they needed to change them and show them a more civilized way of living. In turn, the Natives were killed, tortured, and forced to



live and act the way the white people believed was right. King questions who decides what is the right way and what is the wrong way to live. His novel uses humor and metafiction to show that there is no “absolute” way of life, and furthermore, man does not have the power to decide who should believe what. It seems that he is arguing for an acceptance of others and an acceptance of one’s self.

King has a number of places in the novel where the characters talk about wanting to be white, or not living on the reserve. King seems to be trying to tell his Native readers that they no longer need to try and “pass” as a white person, that being Native is something to be proud of. The character Lionel in the novel was caught in between his life on the reserve and the life away from the reserve. For him to be successful, he believed that he had to become educated at the university and live away from the reserve. Most minorities are faced with similar dilemmas—it is hard to stay faithful to their culture and heritage and live in a world that is a dominantly white.

The final metafictional element that should be brought to light is the way the parts of the book transition into one another and the way the book speaks to the reader. These two elements work to constantly bring the reader out of the fictional world of the novel, thus reinforcing the fact that the novel is a piece of fiction. While reading the novel, the reader is never allowed to get into a real flow before the story changes direction. There are many comments about flowing water, and the stories in this novel appear to flow into one another as if they were water. Some of these water-like transitions can be seen in the following example. A section of the novel ends at a scene in Alberta’s class where there has been a discussion of Indian persecution. The last line in the section ends with a question from one of the students, “Well for one thing, what happened to them?”. The next section starts on the same page with the line “‘What happened to the trees?’ said Hawkeye” (19). This section is a continuation of a very different story from the previous section yet the same question is used to end and start the



sections. King does this numerous times throughout the novel and it causes hesitation in the reader.

The next tool that pulls the reader from the fictional world in the novel is the way that all the characters will be watching or talking about the same thing but they will all be in different places. A great example of this is in the section of the novel in which everyone is watching a western on television, except for Eli—he is reading the western. Everyone is in the same place in the story and even the four old Indians are talking about the western with Coyote. The Western is on channel 26 and the big fight scene that causes discussion is in chapter 26 of the book that Eli is reading. There is so much coincidence here that it really causes the reader to wonder about the reality of the story. Another example of the novel forcing the reader from the fic-  
tional world of the novel is in a section of the book in which one of the old Indians says something in Cherokee. The other Indians tell him that they have already done that (257) and then they give the page number where it was already said. The page happened to be 12 and when page 12 is opened the exact Cherokee phrases said were in fact already said. This is clearly not possible: the characters know that they are in a story. The reader can not help but be brought out of the fictional world at this point. The characters are now talking to the reader.

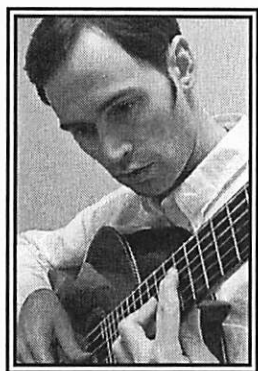
The novel Green Grass, Running Water, is filled with metafiction. The novel never allows the reader to get too involved in a story before the subject is changed. Metafiction is very common in postmodern novels. In a period where absolutes are constantly being questioned, it is only fitting that the novel and the structure of the novel should come into question as well. King definitely challenges the traditional structure of the novel and in doing so, he also tells a very complex and deeply meaningful story as well. Metafiction is not a technique that should be ignored—in the case of this novel, it helps add to the meaning and the importance of the messages that are being told without coming right out and saying them. And anyway as it was so very well put in the novel, “There are no

truths, Coyote,' I says. 'Only stories'"(452), so who is to say how a novel should be written.

#### Works Cited

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Heitor Villa-Lobos began his musical career in Rio de Janeiro. His father, Raul, first taught him to play the viola, and then later, the cello. After his father's death his mother focused on her children's education. However, Villa-Lobos lost interest in his medical studies and started playing with street musicians called "Chorôes". Although he kept it secret from his mother, he decided to take guitar lessons, and it was then that he began to compose for the guitar.

*Chôros No. 1* is the first of a collection of fourteen stylized chôros, and the only one featuring guitar. It was written in 1920 when Villa-Lobos had returned to Rio after years of travel throughout rural Brazil. The buoyant tempo of the piece is felt from the opening phrase. The unexpected pauses and syncopation give the song an interesting texture, and its improvisatory nature lends itself to a wide interpretation. Around this time Villa-Lobos began experimenting with progressive sounds, and several of his compositions for piano and cello were viewed with much controversy.

In 1924 Villa-Lobos met Andrés Segovia and he was encouraged to compose more for the instrument. His *Twelve Etudes* and *Six Preludes* and *Suite Popular Brasileira* have since become essential repertoire for guitarists around the world. The guitar remained a great passion in the life of Villa-Lobos, yet of the thousands of compositions attributed to him, relatively few were written for the guitar. Unfortunately, much of that has been lost or remains unpublished.

Choros #1 by Heitor Villa Lobos





The contention between what is considered high art and what is considered low art is an important issue in postmodern discussions of representation, and it is often addressed in postmodern works. The distinction between high and low art was most sharply made during the modernist period when high art was defined as distinct from the low art of the masses (Best and Kellner 128). Items that were useful were not considered real art; in fact, objects not deliberately made in the traditions of high art were not considered to be art at all. Postmodern works attempt to close the gap between high and low art by rendering both categories of art ironic. Postmodern authors paradoxically use diametrically opposed subjects, such as high and low art and “[install] and then [subvert] familiar conventions of both kinds of art” in their works (Hutcheon 44). This approach forces a reader to consider his or her own values and refuses to coddle the reader or to relieve any discomfort he or she may feel upon reflection. In her novel The Underpainter, Jane Urquhart has given contemporary readers a work that skillfully closes the gap between high and low art through the ironic representation of both, and forces the reader to engage in an evaluation of his or her own values and beliefs.

Urquhart weaves themes of high and low art through The Underpainter in the characters of George and Austin, the art in their respective lives and their discussions. Urquhart narrows the gap between the two kinds of art by creating a most unlikely relationship between these two diametrically opposed characters. The differences displayed in George’s and Austin’s lives are representative of the differences between high and low art. Austin’s father is rich; George’s is poor. Austin considers himself a “serious student of art;” George paints on china. Austin is an American, while George is a Canadian. Austin is the only

child of a wealthy parent and George is the younger brother in a family that can afford to send only one son to school. The contrast between these two young artists and the worlds they live in is immediately apparent in the text. Austin notices right away that George is wearing an apron, the symbol of a working person. Austin immediately feels separated from George: "I felt that this white apron separated him from me entirely; as indisputably as the fact that he painted on china, a pastime of which I, a serious student of art, disapproved" (Urquhart 51). Austin's and George's worlds are so entirely different neither can imagine life in the other's world. When Austin asks why George did not go to art school, he replies "I can't imagine that," and when Austin tries to imagine a life surrounded by china, he finds that he is "utterly unable to do so" (52-52). Yet, despite their apparent incompatibility, George and Austin form a friendship that spans decades--a friendship that merges two art forms as well as two men.

Austin considers his art to be real or serious for many reasons. Austin is being formally trained in art school, while George is a largely self-taught artist. Austin paints on canvases and sells his work in art galleries, while George paints on plates, cups and bowls and earns a living by managing a china shop. Other "serious" artists and collectors buy Austin's work, while common people buy George's work. Austin attempts to depict reality in his paintings, while George paints idyllic and decorative scenes. Austin works from a model, where George works from his imagination. In Austin's mind all of these factors justify his position as a "serious" artist and allows him to discount George's work as merely that of an amateur.

Austin promptly sets himself up as an authority on art in the relationship, and he prides himself that George, although older, looks up to him as a "genuine practitioner" of real art (51). Austin, reveling in his self assigned role as art guru, sits in George's china hall and "scoff[s] at the designs on incoming shipments of table ware, lecture[s] him shamelessly about real art while he smile[s] good-naturedly on the other side of the



counter" (51). Austin tells George that he should work from a model: "then what you do would be more important" (74). Because George's art is useful, Austin cannot see it as art: "The whole collection gave me the impression that George's was a toy country; one to be played in, and played with, but one to be locked away with the dolls when you reached a certain age" (75). Replace the word country with art, and one can see how Austin viewed George's china painting. It was frivolous; therefore, it belonged with frivolous items such as dolls. In Austin's view, when people become mature or serious artists, they should put away childish notions of art, such as china painting. George, however, does not view the china painting the same way Austin does: he questions Austin saying, "How do you know this isn't important" (74). When Austin and George both look at the same piece of china, Austin sees "only a kitchen dish," where George sees "a world . . . a complete world" (76). It is not only china that George and Austin see differently, but nature also. Once, when they are painting the same landscape of Lake Superior, Austin admires the "gorgeous emptiness" of the lake, whereas George thinks "the water needs wind to define it" (89). Although Austin does not respect or accept George's art, he does understand "that the china painting defined George somehow. He was the lake, it was the wind" (91-92).

Just as the china painting defines George, Austin is defined by his art. Austin can be seen as a representative of high art and its ideals, while George can be interpreted as representing low art that does not have pretentious notions about its status. As a "serious student of art," Austin feels that he must keep his thoughts, emotions, and affections to himself. "Protect it, cherish it, keep it. Never give it away" are the words of Austin's idolized teacher, Robert Henri (69). Throughout his life, Austin finds himself unwilling and unable to become intimately involved in other people's lives. Austin gives himself solely to his art and takes from the lives of those who would be his companions through the course of his life. By never giving and



always taking, Austin becomes a thief and tourist of life, but this pilfering of life experience from those around him is an action that is condoned and encouraged by his artistic philosophy. George, as a representation of low art, is an affable fellow who befriends Austin despite his patronizing attitude toward George's china painting. George does not withhold his affections, emotions or thoughts from Austin. Instead, George admires Austin for his artistic abilities and even wills Austin his most prized possession, his china collection, before marching off to war.

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It is during World War I that George first begins to make a distinction between Austin's art and his own. When George was in France, he did not visit the cabarets with his soldier friends; instead, he went to find the places where fine china was made. When George arrived at his destination he discovered that the china factory had been converted to produce war goods and he headed back to Paris. Finally reaching a place where china was being produced, George was in awe of the delicate work that was being done. George recalls nearly everything he had seen in that place with remarkable clarity; yet, when Austin questions him about the art museums of Paris, George can only vaguely recall that the subject matter was violent, "but couldn't specifically say what form the violence had taken" (191). Upon viewing the china of the French artisans and the paintings of the Louvre, George is able to see the differences between his art and Austin's: "'There were two worlds of art,' he declared. 'One up there,' he pointed to the ceiling, 'and one down here,' he gestured towards the ground" (188). While in Paris, George talks with the artisans who create the china that he so loves and finds that, with the war, there is no demand for the beautiful pieces they produce: "The war finished them off altogether. Nothing beautiful and fragile could survive it" (190). Upon returning to Canada after the war, George remarks to Austin, "there is only one world of art now, the war finished the other one off. Only one world of art, Yours" (193). Ultimately, it is Austin's inability to interpret this



comment "as anything other than a compliment" that destroys the relationship between Austin and George (193).

Austin's world of art is a self-absorbed one, just as Austin is a self-absorbed artist. He has so perfected the art of distancing himself from the interference of others that he is unable to see the worth of others and how their existence makes his better. His lack of understanding is clearly portrayed in his attitude towards George's lament for the lost art: "I was thinking that it was just as well that George's 'beautiful, fragile' objects were no longer being made, believing that, had I seen them I would have found them to be in questionable taste" (191). These "beautiful" and "fragile" objects are not only china pieces, but representations of a type of person. The war killed off any lingering romantic notions about the basic goodness of humanity; consequently, only the cynical and confusing ideals of humanity of Austin's art remained.

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Even as Austin's art is granted survival, George's is condemned to die. Thus, a part of George, who puts his own experiences and emotions into his art, dies in the war as well. That part was the understanding and patient man who tolerated the condescending discourses of Austin. A different George is seen in the years following the war, one who no longer suffers the arrogance of Austin's artistic ideals in silence, one who when confronted with Austin's complete insensitivity and thoughtlessness, is able to respond by thrusting a piece of his art, a china cup, in Austin's face and saying, "At least I could have taken some nourishment from this. At least I could have filled it again and again with warmth. Can you say the same thing about anything you've done?" (284).

Toward the end of his life, Austin begins to answer this question. He examines the costs of his art and what it has accomplished. In his reflections on the past and his actions, or rather his inaction, Austin is faced with the reality that his art and his life, in the broadest sense, has accomplished nothing. His art hangs on walls in vast, cold galleries giving pleasure to a very few, whereas George's art, although functional, gives

pleasure to countless generations. Unable to give or receive love from those who were willing to give it to him, Austin alienates the four people who could have made his life richer and deeper: Sarah, his model and mistress for fifteen years; George, the boy who accepted and befriended him regardless of their differences; Rockwell, his fellow painter who embraced life; Augusta, who offers a chance at redemption from his self-centered sphere by daring to get involved in another person's problems. These were the people, the low art forms, that, had Austin chosen to see them, could have saved him from the heartbreak and remorse of a life spent on an art that does not give back.

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The gap between high and low is narrowed in the paradox of Austin's highly successful Erasure series of paintings. In these works, Austin paints images from times past. However, they are not of his life experience; rather, they are of the critical times he spent with Sarah, George, Augusta, and Rockwell, times where he could have broken out of his isolated world and engaged in life with people who cared about him. In these paintings, Austin carefully paints a scene with vivid colors and strikingly realistic looking figures. After this has been completed, he takes white paint and layer by layer paints over the scenes from the past. In this series, Austin implicitly recognizes moments in the past where he could have changed, and then by painting it over, he conceals from the world these moments of possible redemption. One such painting, titled *Night in the China Hall*, is of the time Austin spent with Augusta in George's china shop, waiting for George to return from the station. Augusta pours out her life story to Austin, even though she is aware that he is not really interested. She tells him of her childhood, her trials in the war, her battles with her addiction to morphine, and her first encounter with George. After spilling out her entire life story, Augusta goes upstairs and dies of a morphine overdose. The idea that Augusta could be in a fragile state of mind does not occur to Austin; he remains in his own world downstairs until dawn breaks and George returns to the shop. George immediately realizes what has happened and



rushes up the stairs to check on Augusta. Austin, down below, hears smashing china and imagines George and Augusta are fighting. He waits two hours before going upstairs to check on them, and discovers them both dead of overdoses, with George's precious china collection smashed on the floor. This is Austin's inheritance from George. George would rather smash his most cherished possessions than leave them in the care of Austin, who does not or will not see their value, just as he refuses to see the value in other people. All of this Austin puts into the underpainting and then carefully paints it all out, covering it with white until it can no longer be seen.

The gap between high and low art is closed when Austin finishes the life-long task of gluing back together George's china collection and begins painting his final canvas, titled *The Underpainter*. It will be a self-portrait and the first time Austin will put himself fully into his work. He will paint his entire life experience from his memories of his mother, to the reconstructed pieces of George's china collection, to the items in Sarah's house. They will all be there and he will paint "the love [he] could never accept coming toward [him]" (340). And when it is finished, he will not paint it over; instead, he will keep it close to him so he can "look at the images there, from time to time" (340). Austin finally is able to acknowledge the consequences of his inaction and accept too late the love that he could have had. Finally, without attempting to justify the past, he faces its costs.

Olympics of the Mind

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